

THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*.

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke*.

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CHRISTIANITY AT THE CROSS ROADS THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN

BY THE EDITOR.

THE twenty-fourth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen held at Girton College, Cambridge, August 30th to September 4th, took as its theme 'Christianity and the Religious Crisis.' The following fifteen papers, published in full in this issue of the *Modern Churchman*, were read before the Conference and discussed by it:—

The Present Religious Crisis, by the Right Rev. E. W. BARNES, Sc.D., D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

Christianity and Civilization, by Canon ROGER LLOYD, M.A.

The Church and the New Science and the New Philosophy, by Dr. F. R. TENNANT, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

The Church and Modern Historical Research and Biblical Criticism, by Dr. S. H. HOOKE, Professor of Old Testament Studies, London University.

The Church and the Economic and Political Situation, by
CANON GUY ROGERS, M.C., B.D., Rector of Birmingham.

The Church and the New Morality, by Dr. ST. JOHN ERVINE,
Member of the Irish Academy, Fellow of the Royal
Society of Literature.

The Flight from Reason, by the Rev. J. C. HARDWICK,
M.A., B.Sc.

Christianity and Communism, by Dr. JOSEPH NEEDHAM,
Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.

Christianity and Fascism, by Sir ARNOLD WILSON, M.P.,
Editor of the *Nineteenth Century*.

Christianity and the English Democratic Movement, by
Chancellor H. G. MULLINER, M.A.

The Fundamentalist Solution, by the Rev. L. E. BROWNE,
D.D.

The Romanist Solution, by the Rev. A. R. VIDLER, M.A.

The Humanist Solution, by the Rev. G. L. H. HARVEY,
M.A.

Christianity Inside and Outside the Churches, by CLAUD
MULLINS, ESQ.

The Opportunity and Mission of the Church of England, by
the Rev. L. B. CROSS, M.A., Fellow of Jesus College,
Oxford; Vice-Principal of Ripon Hall.

The numbers attending the Conference were larger than usual and the discussions were educative. In its editorial comment on the Girton Conference, the *Church Times* of September 2nd asserts that 'Modernism has little enough pre-emption on the educated classes.' If the *Church Times* means by this statement that Modernist views have no interest for educated people in England, we should judge that the inference is contradicted by the widespread publicity given to the transactions of the Conference by the better class journals of this country. Professed Modernists are but a small minority in the Church Assembly, and it cannot be claimed that they carry much weight in the lower Houses of Convocation, although the Modernist leaven even there is slowly leavening the clericalist lump. On the other hand, Modernists do represent the steadily increasing body of Churchmen who are ceasing to take any part in organized Church life both at home and abroad. This is why the publicity

given in the Press to the utterances of the Girton Conference was so much greater than the *Church Times* believes those utterances to deserve. It is because the utterances of the Girton Conference are not representative of the Church Assembly that they deserve special attention by the Church authorities, for they do represent the convictions, more often silent than expressed, of that great body of our fellow-countrymen who have ceased to be practising Churchmen. The Church authorities desire, as much as we who are Modernists, that this vast and increasing body of our fellow-countrymen should be won to practising Church membership. But unless their outlook and convictions are understood and appreciated and practical concessions made to them in Church doctrine, worship and policy by our Church authorities, the hope of winning them back to Church life must be extinguished.

This point was particularly emphasized by Mr. Claud Mullins, the metropolitan magistrate. He was convinced that 'unless the Church of England can include those who are loyal to Christ but doubtful about dogmas that Christ never knew, it must dwindle into a sect.' This is undoubtedly the case. But how is the Church to get rid of the dogmatic barrier which excludes so many modern men and women? St. Paul in his *Epistle to the Ephesians* claimed that Christ had broken down the middle wall of partition which separated Jew and Gentile. Has not Christ also, if we understand Him aright, broken down the barrier which separates dogmatic Christians of the traditionalist type from Modernist Christians whose dogmas are so few and so fundamental that they do not go beyond the essential teaching of Jesus Christ Himself?

These Modernists do not deny the value for past ages of much of the dogmatic super-structure, which the Church erected on the foundation of the teaching of Jesus Christ Himself. But they do deny the value and validity of such a dogmatic super-structure for the world of to-day. Biblical and historical criticism, together with the necessities of the present religious crisis, are demanding the Church's return to the doctrinal simplicity of Jesus Christ Himself. Not only could ecclesiastical union be secured by such a simplification, but, what is of much more importance, vast multitudes of educated men and women of good

will who are at present outside the Church could be brought into its membership. It is grotesque that a Church whose Lord laid so much stress upon loyalty in character and conduct, and so little stress upon dogmatic professions, should itself lay such enormous stress upon dogmatic professions and exclude from its membership and ministry those who cannot conscientiously make these dogmatic professions.

It is not necessary for the present distress that the Church should prohibit the dogmatic traditionalist from believing all he does believe, but it is necessary that the Church should state definitely and courageously that it desires that all whose faith is that of Jesus Christ Himself should enter its membership. Is the Church prepared to do this? When the Archbishops' doctrinal commission which has been sitting for fourteen years past presents its report, we shall know the answer. Meanwhile, the dogmatic barrier is doing its deadly work of exclusion, and men and women who, judged by Christ's standard, are more truly Christian than many inside the Church, are excluded from that Church by their own conscientious convictions.

But the dogmatic is not the only exclusive barrier at the present time. A month or two ago an English clergyman said to the writer of this editorial: 'What is wrong with the Church of England to-day? All the clergy seem to be going in one direction and all the laity in another.' This clergyman would not be recognized by many of his fellow-Churchmen as a Modernist. He is hard to label. He is an open-minded, modern, educated man who would be best described as a 'good Churchman.' During six years in his parish he has presented 800 of his parishioners for confirmation and had some 1,200 communicants at Easter and over 400 on Ascension Day. What then does his question indicate? It is this: that clerical religion and lay religion are becoming more and more separated in our Church life, and while clerical religion is becoming dominant within the churches, the laity are ceasing more and more to use the church services for the maintenance and inspiration of their religious life. An increasing body of the clergy cannot understand why the laity are not attracted by that which attracts them in their church services. They believe it to be due to some lack of spirituality in the laity. What they fail to recognize is that there is a lay Christianity and

a lay ideal of Christian worship which the clergy must learn to appreciate, and not only to appreciate but to teach and practise in their parishes if they would be true servants of the servants of God.

It has to be recognized that the bulk of the laity are not sacramentalists. The increasing clericalist stress upon the sacraments and upon the sacrament of the Holy Communion or of the Mass, as many English clergymen prefer to call it to-day, is one of the things which has alienated many English people from the services in their parish churches. The clergy think that the laity ought to be glad to come to this service at least every Sunday morning, but the laity are not glad to come. Not a few of them will come to such a service three times a year: a smaller proportion will come once a month; still a smaller proportion will come weekly to an early Communion service, and this represents the standard of sacramental usage which the clergy of the English Church have secured as the result of intensive sacramentalist propaganda. Many of the clergy seem resolved to-day to reduce the practising membership of the Church to the numbers of the sacramentalist laity, and in many parishes they have succeeded in doing so.

What is true of the church services is also true of church teaching. It is too ecclesiastical and not sufficiently moral and spiritual. It takes its stand upon church tradition and dogma; not upon the broad basis of Christian principles applied to many-sided modern life. The Christian pulpit can still be a power, as every great Christian teacher demonstrates, but its teaching has to be modernist if it is to be influential. If it be true, as the Bishop of Birmingham asserted, that congregations to-day in our churches are only a quarter of what they were before the Great War, this is not entirely due to the failure of the Church to modernize its dogma, services and preaching. Other Christian bodies in this land which have tried to move with the times have suffered not less seriously than the Church of England. The *Inquirer*, a Unitarian paper, states (Sept. 4th, 1937) that

'At the Methodist Annual Conference, held last July, grave concern was expressed as to the decline in the number of the older scholars. It was reported that a hundred thousand boys and girls between the ages of fourteen and fifteen had walked out of Methodist Sunday Schools

last year, and very few of them had joined the church. In over 400 circuits, with more than 36,000 scholars, not a single scholar had been received into church membership.'

This desertion by the young of the religion of their fathers cannot be due entirely, nor indeed to any very large extent, to the causes which we have named above. It is undoubtedly due to counter-attractions brought about by the secularization of Sunday. The English Sunday is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Motor transit, increased wages, Sunday amusements, have largely brought it about. In English-speaking lands, Sunday was the day of Christian education—the elucidation and inculcation of Christian ideals and practice—and with the secularization of Sunday, there has been a consequent falling off in the Christian education of a large proportion of the adult population. It is true that the wireless, and in some small measure the popular press, are contributing to Christian education in the homes of the people, but we doubt if they are doing effectively the work which was formerly done by the Christian pulpit. Moreover, the non-existence or inadequacy of Christian education in many of our day schools is also telling heavily against the influence of the Christian religion in the life of the young. Yet, on the other hand, the boy scout movement is undoubtedly a Christian influence of the right kind. It is by no means clear how far England is ceasing to be Christian in the deepest sense. Certain vices are notably on the increase, such as gambling; possibly sexual immorality. But on the other hand, the spirit of humanity, kindness, courtesy, disinterestedness, courage, seem at least as high or higher than they have ever been. When we think of our hospitals, maintained by voluntary contributions, and the response to humane appeals of every description, we cannot but be conscious that we are still a Christian people. Yet the number of killed and injured on our roads makes us less self-satisfied on this score. Undoubtedly our Christianity is not shewing itself in the way it used to shew itself a generation ago. Nevertheless it seems to be shewing itself to-day in other ways, especially in the sphere of social justice and sensitiveness to human and animal suffering. The most serious question is whether the English nation is living on its Christian capital or whether the nation is evolving a new kind of Christianity more moral and spiritual, perhaps, than some of the older types, but

not dependent upon sacramental and liturgical rites for its maintenance. If this be so, it is very important to discover by what means the new kind of Christianity is to be maintained and developed. It will certainly stand in need of education and of varied forms of social organization. What are these and what ought they to be? Will public Christian worship, and Christian rites, Christian Scriptures and Christian church buildings, and even the Christian ministry, be dispensed with? And shall we maintain and propagate our new form of Christian religion in new ways? We know that the Christian religion is not dependent upon sacred times and seasons, sacred places and sacred buildings, sacred ministries and rites, although it has made a very notable use of them during the last two thousand years. The Christian religion is *the* Religion of the Spirit, and the ideals and demands of that religion are written by the Spirit of God in the conscience and mind of man. Jeremiah, 600 B.C., predicted a time when 'they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying: Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me from the least of them until the greatest of them, saith the Lord,' for 'I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it.' It is by no means clear that this desirable state of things has been achieved among our countrymen, but if it has, the serious question arises: How is it to be maintained? Some will see in the present state of affairs a situation closely akin to that described by Bishop Butler in the Preface to his *Analogy* written nearly two hundred years ago.

'It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is now at length discovered to be fictitious, and that nothing remains but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.'

Very little reflection will shew that this is not the spirit of this age and country. There seems to be an underlying conviction that the Christian religion is true and that the Christian religion is needful; but by the Christian religion is meant the spirit of Love, Peace, Righteousness, Truth, Freedom, which are enshrined in the teaching and personality of Jesus Christ Himself.

If our civilization is to survive and progress it must somehow be equated with this Christian spirit. But if the Christian spirit is not dependent for its maintenance and propaganda upon

the rites and the ministries of institutional Christianity, is it not dependent upon a conviction of the truth of the fundamental affirmations of Christian theology? Can the Christian spirit be maintained and propagated on the basis of a materialist or agnostic Humanism? Speaking for ourselves, we are convinced that the survival of the Christian life is ultimately dependent on the survival of the Christian faith. By the Christian faith, it will be clear that we mean the faith of Jesus Christ Himself, not the dogmatic systems developed in later Christian ages. We are of opinion that at the present time our Christian civilization is living upon its inherited Christian capital. The old investments are depreciating rapidly and no new capital is being created by the Christian Church. If the Christian values are to be maintained in our modern world, it would seem that they demand reorganized thought-forms and reorganized institutions. The theological must express itself psychologically and the ecclesiastical must realize itself socially.

The question, as to whether the Christian life is tied to one kind of political organization and one kind of social and economic system was answered with a decisive negative in the Conference discussions.

For God fulfils Himself in many ways
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

The Christian Religion, whilst loyal to the fundamental principles of Jesus, is yet evolutionary under the guidance of the Divine Spirit. The Christian Church has also to be correspondingly evolutionary in its institutional forms. New wine must be put into new bottles. But we all recognize to-day that it is not simply our ecclesiastical institutions but also our social and political institutions which are evolutionary or ought to be so, if they are to subserve human welfare. General Ludendorf has predicted that Christianity will prove to be the ruin of the British Empire. What he precisely means by Christianity may be difficult to define, save that it is the spirit which inspires the League of Nations, anti-militarism, political liberalism, tolerance of the Jews and respect for the rights of minorities. It is not the British Empire alone which is faced with the issue whether it will be Christian or Pagan. To-day it is not only Christianity which is at the Cross Roads, but humanity also.

THE PRESENT RELIGIOUS CRISIS

By the Right Rev. E. W. BARNES, Sc.D., F.R.S., D.D., LL.D.,
Bishop of Birmingham.

DURING the last two decades Christianity has suffered a set-back more serious than any which it has experienced since the strong advance which made it by the end of the third century of our era the dominant faith of the ancient world. There have been times in the past when it has met with disastrous reverses. The barbarian hordes from north and eastern Europe replaced Christian culture by a vigorous paganism over large areas of the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. Subsequently there was a prolonged conflict with Mahomedanism in the course of which Christianity was practically destroyed in north Africa and western Asia. Later there was a time when Arabian philosophers, mathematicians and astronomers kept alight the torch of civilization; under the Crescent rather than the Cross intellectual activity flourished. But certainly for the five centuries preceding our own, an onlooker would have said that Christianity need not fear the future. In various forms, some relatively pure, some paganized, some morally unsatisfactory, it not only held its own but it also extended the range of its influence. In Europe no other faith was a serious competitor. It is true that the French Revolution shewed that, when Catholicism and despotism enjoyed an alliance fatally congenial to the former, popular resentment did not spare either. But, apparently, anti-Christian feeling in France, though by no means negligible, was lessening during the nineteenth century.

In the century and a half before the war, enthusiasm for missionary progress, active in many Christian countries, carried the Christian faith all over the world. The Protestantism of north America was as sturdy as that of Britain and northern Europe. South and central America were on the surface Catholic, though the veneer was thin. Even the great ancient civilizations of Asia accorded respect to the faith of the all-conquering European. There was hope that Mahomedanism would crumble under the Christian impact.

Moreover Christianity, by reason of the progress made under its influence, seemed worthy of the respect which it received. The Christian nations of Europe, under the stimulus of the Renaissance, began anew the direct study of nature which arose under the Ionian Greeks and unfortunately perished before the classical civilization of the ancient world came to an end. This study led to the amazing triumphs of modern science, the discoveries and inventions which have transformed the material conditions of human life in the modern world.

With free and untrammelled enquiry into nature went the growth of free speculative enquiry. This freedom and some of its results were not liked by those branches of the Church which maintained the ideal of a static creed, the 'faith once delivered to the saints.' There was trouble with Giordano Bruno, culminating in his martyrdom in 1600. Galileo in the seventeenth century was made to declare that the earth was the fixed centre of the universe. The progress of geology in the early nineteenth century was anathema to the ecclesiastical mind. Almost in our own day Darwin's argument that man was descended from an ape-like stock was a cause of furious resentment. But always a process of accommodation between new knowledge and traditional belief proved possible. The sense of tension would have been greater but for the fact that modern science was deemed a constituent part of 'Christian civilization.' It gave such material power to its possessors and was obviously of such value to mankind that it gained vast prestige; and that this prestige was shared by Christianity was a cause of satisfaction to Christian ecclesiastics.

But there were many signs that a crisis was approaching. Free speculative enquiry led to the rise of European philosophy. The great men of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Descartes, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, sowed seed which only slowly germinated. Their direct influence on the mass of men has been slight. But few modern intellectuals can escape their critical spirit. They have left us a sense of the immense difficulty of the fundamental problems of the universe; and the pantheism and, alternatively, the agnostic naturalism to which European philosophical enquiry has often led have so much in common with Eastern religious philosophies that a new respect for Hindu

and Chinese thought was gradually created. Concurrently with the successive challenges of science and the corrosive effect of philosophical speculation there was a prolonged critico-historical investigation of the origins of Christianity. A transformation of our ideas as to the growth of the Old Testament and as to the authority and dates of its books became common among educated men a generation ago. Since then a similar process of examination of the books of the New Testament has led to conclusions, equally revolutionary, and far more momentous because they are nearer to the heart of Christianity. There still continues a new manifestation of a process only too familiar in recent centuries. Ecclesiastics and ecclesiastical assemblies, together with the scholars on whom they rely and to whom they give their favour, have with an unhappy instinct ignored the new work or, if it could not be ignored, have condemned it as rash and unbalanced. The more or less educated public, with an instinct fortified by knowledge of similar past conflicts, has sided with the innovators. But whereas in the past the battle had been for some, possibly important, outpost, now it seems to be for the citadel itself.

There might well have been in connection with the latest discoveries a new process of adjustment, a great development which would have given us a transformation of Christianity more satisfying because richer in its moral and spiritual content. But the turmoil caused by the war made men ready for rapid and even violent change. The religious crisis began in Russia. There upon an inefficient despotism there fawned a corrupt Church — how corrupt the story of Rasputin revealed. The revolution swept away Czar and Church alike. Since then the new Soviet system of education has created in Russia a generation of young people to whom Christianity is a superstition unworthy of an intelligent race. The faith of Russia is now ‘dialectical materialism,’ which I would liken rather to husks than to corn. The association of this creed with the struggle for political and economic freedom has produced in Spain the most unexpected religious revolt of the modern era. Even half-a-dozen years ago acute observers thought that the power of Catholicism in Spain was as secure as in Ireland. The Church was enormously wealthy : its control over education was well-nigh absolute. Yet

when once the Spanish Revolution let free popular passion, priests and churches were attacked with an angry zeal which was obviously spontaneous. There must have been, in secret, a bitter animosity to the Church as the enemy of spiritual and material freedom. Is such animosity latent in Italy? In that land the Church is the ally, if not the tool, of Fascism. The Deums celebrate victories achieved over ill-armed Abyssinians by the aeroplanes and poison gas of 'Catholic civilization.' Taxation, already harsh, is becoming harsher. When revolution comes in Italy, will the Church escape the indignation and pent-up rage of the people? The hold of the Catholic Church upon southern Ireland seems secure: I leave others to say how far the country and its government shew the graces of the Christian spirit. In France the dominant Catholicism is the religion of the women, oddly emotional and superstitious for so clear-thinking and sceptical a people. It is also, on the one hand, an organized health cult and, on the other, a soldier's faith. Protestantism in France is numerically weak, strongly patriotic and puritan, with the strength and defects of puritanism.

In Germany we have, of late, seen the most perplexing of all the religious movements of the Continent. Before the war Germany was the home of critical religious thought. Its teachers were pre-eminent alike in the philosophy of religion and in biblical scholarship. During the last fifteen years German supremacy in critico-historical investigations of the origins of Christianity has passed to France. But in the disillusion which followed the war a new type of apologetic arose among certain German or German-Swiss Protestant leaders. It was evasive, at bottom anti-intellectual, professedly indifferent, if not hostile, to human achievement; and, it was also to many of us, repulsively dictatorial and rhetorical. By the irony of things, this strange reaction has captured the allegiance of many in England to whom before the war German theology stood for all that was evil. Apart from the so-called 'theology of crisis' there was little that was vital in post-war German religion. Morally the country went to pieces. The renaissance came with the Nazi movement which, while brutal in its denial of freedom, justice and truth when the fancied interests of the state were in question, sought to cleanse the nation of its moral corruption. One

might have expected that Catholicism with its affinity for despotism and Protestantism with its affinity for moral reform would alike have worked in alliance with the new government. But a new era in European religious history began when the government refused such co-operation. In effect the Nazis repudiated Christ, and that divine revelation of His for which all Churches profess supreme regard, and instead chose as their ideal the welfare of the German people and the glory of the German state. No one who has been of late in Germany and has seen the organized attempts to secure the health and happiness, the mental and physical efficiency of boys and girls, young men and women, can doubt either the sincerity of the new aims or the large measure of success by which they have been attended. The Christian religion is dismissed as irrelevant. It must be sorrowfully admitted that, if one may judge by church attendance, Christianity in Germany is to-day of little moment. Catholic worship attracts the aged and the docile: attendance at Protestant services is pathetically small. The dispute between the government and the so-called Confessional Church is, as seen by us, unduly magnified. A small group of religious enthusiasts, with no distinctive message of significance, is remarkable in demanding freedom under a system where uniformity is deemed of more importance than freedom.

Why, it must be asked, should the Nazi government have shewn such indifference, if not antipathy, to Christianity? I believe that this attitude results from an honestly-held conviction on the part of its leaders that, in its essentials, Christianity is untrue, and that a large majority of the German people accept this negation. The Minister in charge of religious affairs in Germany did not affirm a short while ago that the belief that Jesus was the Son of God was ridiculous; but he did say that it was ridiculous to expect him to accept such a belief; and there seems no doubt that in this matter he has the sympathy of a majority—how large we cannot say—of thoughtful Germans. Belief in the other world of Christ's revelation, in Him as God's Son bringing to men the Divine message—such belief has lamentably decayed. In place of the old faith there is a vague pantheism finding its centre in the state and its leader. In Japan the direction of religious emotion has been curiously similar and the

reaction against Christianity severe.

We come finally to our own country, so distinctive in its history and reactions and yet so obviously a part of European civilization. We have had our post-war lethargy, our moral decadence : our ethical standards have fallen. Religious belief has decayed : our congregations — and this is true of practically all communions — are little more than a quarter of what they were a generation ago. There is not only doubt as to traditional beliefs : there is also a conviction that in the world of to-day acceptance of Christ's principles would be suicidal. As a rule men and women in Britain are prepared to allow that the Christian ethic is beautiful and that it probably expresses the Divine nature so far as man can understand God. But they think that the material well-being of the individual and the safety of the nation would alike be jeopardized if Christ's teaching ruled action in a largely non-Christian world. As regards belief, one would have expected that those Churches would have fared better where belief is more fluid than in communions with fixed creeds. But no such happier experience can be discovered. So far as one can tell by personal contacts, it is only a relatively small minority of enthusiasts — or fanatics — in any Church who are warmly attached to traditional forms of belief. Tolerance bred of agnosticism leads to an indifference averse from change. 'The things the clergy believe' or 'what the minister thinks important' are viewed as idiosyncracies of worthy men — idiosyncracies which, after all, are seldom intruded into private life. Opposition is only aroused when from the pulpit there comes an approach to communism or pacificism.

The most disquieting feature of the present religious situation in England is the loss of personal interest in religion. There is little organized hostility to Christianity, though there is a widespread dislike of bigotry and intolerance. Most English people view with approval the teaching of the Christian faith because of the improvement in character which accompanies sincere Christian belief. Thus, though they never personally go to church or chapel, they will send their children to Sunday school or subscribe liberally to such causes as the extension of church work in new centres of population. It is as though men were fully aware of the practical value of the Christian faith but sadly

conscious that it must be left for those less enlightened than themselves.

There are no signs of an approaching revolution in Britain : the stability of the people under the stresses and strains of the modern world is marvellous. If—which God forbid—we were to have another international war, one or more political revolutions would almost certainly follow. I doubt, however, whether they would be anti-Christian in character. The Church of England would be disestablished and disendowed : but Christian worship would remain free and might even be encouraged by a government either of the right or of the left. A vague theism, a reverence for Christ as one of the greatest of the sons of men, though His dreams, alas ! were impracticable—such is, and probably will for some time remain, the average Englishman's religious outlook. Such an attitude has doubtless always been present among us. But during the last two generations the number of those accepting it has grown enormously. One disquieting consequence is that no Church can get an adequate supply of men of the right type to enter its ministry. Little more than a generation ago the number of men at Oxford and Cambridge intending to take Holy Orders was greater than those intended for any other career : now such men form an almost negligible minority. The newer universities supply men for various Christian ministries, though seldom the best men. Nearly one-half of our Church of England ordinands lack university degrees—a most significant fact when the vast increase in the number of university students during the last generation is remembered. Other communions are equally unfortunate : they cannot recruit for clergy or ministers well-educated men of character with natural capacity for leadership. A second disquieting consequence of the present British attitude to religion is that in our secondary and elementary schools the number of teachers of either sex ready and willing to give religious instruction is diminishing. Two generations ago there were bitter fights at School Board elections between those who desired religious teaching and those who feared that it might be used for sectarian advantage. Those disputes are now half forgotten. They have been replaced by a general agreement as to the value of sincere Christian belief, provided only it be free from intolerance. But the time may not

be far distant when the general desire for Christian teaching is made of none effect by the tacit reluctance or open refusal of the teachers to give it.

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I have described the present religious crisis : and I trust that my description may have some value as an introduction to our present conference. Naturally I have ignored much that might reasonably be deemed relevant. I have said little as to the Christian Church in south-eastern Europe, because there for the most part it assumes a character which is political rather than religious. The Orthodox Church in countries which were formerly under Turkish rule shewed great vitality under adverse circumstances. But it suffered in that it became theologically stagnant while its moral witness was impoverished. Perhaps the sympathy for Byzantine religion felt and expressed—not always judiciously—by some leaders of the Church of England may help its recovery.

It might be objected that I have ignored the United States of America and our own Dominions with their significant religious developments. But I think it true to say that, *mutatis mutandis*, conditions and movements in all English-speaking communities are parallel to those in England. I do not wish to imply that we lead and other peoples follow. America has led in such philosophical movements as pragmatism : in the psychology of religion her teachers did valuable pioneer work : we are perhaps less grateful that she sent us Christian Science. But the common bond of language preserves similarities that have had a common origin. Perhaps one can fairly say that in America home conditions are exaggerated. Her humanism is more down-right : her Anglo-Catholicism more extravagantly bizarre : her Roman Catholicism more politically intrusive : her fundamentalism more pugnacious. There, as here, outstanding gifts of character and ability are too seldom found in the ministries of the various Churches. Some day the American people, in a natural desire to be better governed, will create a permanent civil service of our type. When that day comes there will be a further demand for men of first-rate quality. Thus the prospect before the Churches is gloomy unless a religious revival, some great spiritual outburst finding its centre in Christ, appears.

At this point I come to what seems to me to be the world's greatest need—and, ultimately, its only hope. Humanity needs the sudden quickening that is not impossible, some contagious conviction, running round the world like the dawn, a glowing understanding that we are all one in Christ Jesus. If that understanding came in power, we might hope to get a beginning of the international unity, the peace through righteousness, of which we dream and for which we pray.

Quite obviously there can be no unity—on the contrary there must be veiled or open animosity—so long as there exists a welter of different faiths or loyalties in active competition within what is now the single complex of humanity. The present religious chaos is, in part, the result of the increase of man's knowledge during the last hundred years; but, in part, it is a consequence of the conflict brought about by close contact between different religious traditions. Such traditions have been so long held in relative isolation that they have become elements in the mental disposition of the various peoples. They are held the more strongly when they are held half-consciously. As different traditions rub against one another they may tend to disintegrate, but the friction that arises certainly produces racial animosity. Thus are accentuated the twin dangers that confront us, the decay of faith and nationalist bitterness. The only hope for the world lies in the growth of tolerance, of sympathetic understanding, and of a common religious idealism. Science, medicine, invention, commerce and finance are already largely independent of national characteristics. They are, in a true sense, super-national. Everywhere they are important elements in education; and, to that extent, the content of education is becoming the same all over the world. Again, philosophy is, in part, derived from scientific knowledge: in part, it is the result of the individual's reaction to his environment. The universal element in philosophy is becoming of increasing importance as the outlook created by modern science spreads among all peoples. Simultaneously the closer contacts of different peoples must tend to create common standards of behaviour. Philosophy and ethics are so closely allied to religion that we may expect the gradual growth of a common religious outlook. Yet if, in the clash of rival nationalisms, standards of behaviour grow

worse, while the degeneration to which war leads barbarizes philosophy and allows superstitions to grow apace, the general religious outlook of humanity may become a sorry thing. I personally have little hope for the immediate future of mankind unless what we may call the spirit of Christianity can be made to prevail. This spirit is far more than a code of conduct in which, between nations, righteousness and peace are preferred to selfishness and aggression : it is such a code of conduct but based upon a belief that goodness is inherent in the scheme of things and shall in the end prevail. Standards of beauty can change constantly in the same nation : they can differ widely in different nations : and no harm will ensue. But if regard for truth and goodness declines, the whole level of civilization must be lowered, and intercourse between different peoples must become increasingly dangerous. To me Christianity is the belief, central in the teaching of Christ, that the Creator of the Universe is good and demands goodness of man, the moral being whom He has created. God is the truth, leading His children to an eternal home beyond the gate of death : and He demands that they should seek truth and be true in their dealings one with another. Such Christianity, I plead, is the world's need.

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What can we, who are modernists, usefully do at the present time? It is sometimes said that we are a negligible body, few in numbers, a left-wing fragment of the Church of England. Probably we are, relatively to the whole of our Church, as insignificant numerically as are the Quakers in relation to the whole of Christendom. But numerical strength is no measure of value or of importance. The influence of English modernism during the last two generations has been far-reaching : it is not yet exhausted. Let me remind you of our basal principle : we cannot repeat it too often. We affirm that *Christianity is not a static body of dogma but a religion which grows in richness and value as new knowledge enters into and modifies the Christian tradition*. For us there can be no quarrel between Christianity and science or between Christianity and modern knowledge, for in all questions of science, history or literary criticism we accept the judgment of experts. All that we ask is that the experts

shall be independent : they shall seek truth without feeling compelled to reach a pre-determined conclusion. Too often, alike in the past and in the present, Christian scholars have felt bound to maintain traditional opinion, either from a sense of misplaced loyalty or because of economic dependence. We allow it to be natural that a man should feel under an obligation to defend the opinions of a communion which supports him. But we affirm that a man gives bad service to a Church when, because he may arouse suspicion and ill-will or be charged with ingratitude, he does not whole-heartedly seek the truth. Think of what most of the branches of the Christian Church have lost because their leaders took the wrong side in the conflicts which have arisen out of the advance of scientific discovery during the last two centuries. In the long run, at all events while civilization progresses, the truth wins ; and that Church best preserves its good name which has a corporate mind most open to new aspects of truth.

We modernists, then, whenever new knowledge conflicts with old belief turn to the independent experts and accept their conclusions. Traditionalists remind us that the experts may be mistaken. We reply that at every crisis traditionalists who have affirmed that the experts were wrong have themselves been proved mistaken. The belief that groups of men honestly seeking the truth will ultimately agree to accept what is false involves a denial of the capacity of the human mind to reach truth. To some—they are usually aggressive dogmatists—the belittling of human reason is congenial. But if man's reason is a worthless tool, he has no other.

We let the dead bury their dead. The beliefs that the earth is the fixed centre of the universe, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, that the speculative ideas of Genesis can be reconciled with the known facts of geology, that man was specially created and not descended from an ape-like stock : all these are dead. For us they may bury themselves. They do not belong to living Christianity.

There are, however, many who, while professing agreement with us, would affirm that the era of disputes is over. The disturbing fact is that a new era of disputes has only recently begun. It was at the beginning of this century that Wellhausen applied

to the Gospels the methods of critical enquiry which had previously revolutionized our understanding of the Old Testament. The enquiries which he initiated have led to the creation of a body of Gospel criticism which is bound to be resented as it becomes generally known. Sanday felt its influence when at Oxford in the second decade of the present century he expressed the view that the Gospel miracles were not historical facts. I remember at the time talking to Davidson, then Archbishop of Canterbury. His restraining hand prevented zealots from raising a heresy hunt — though it must be admitted that to persecute an Oxford professor for heresy is not in present conditions a hopeful undertaking. Davidson said that personally he doubted Sanday's conclusions, though the whole issue was to him obscure. When I spoke sympathetically of the difficulties which such critical investigations caused him, he said grimly that they were nothing compared with those his successors would encounter a generation or two later. These difficulties and conflicts are coming. When they come we and our successors, as modernists, will accept the judgment of independent experts, even though men say that we are betraying the faith to which we are pledged. At every crisis this has been said. As we look back we see that every such so-called betrayal has meant an enlargement of Christian horizons, a strengthening of the essentials of the Christian faith. I have myself no doubt that a century or two hence, if our civilization survives, some will say that the then triumphant Gospel criticism, by freeing our tradition from elements that had become incredible, had directed attention anew to what in the Christian message was of outstanding importance to mankind. The purified faith will be seen to be imperatively necessary for the stability of the world, though as unacceptable as ever to unregenerate man with his predatory interests. The fight between the good and evil in the human heart, between good men and bad men, will not end in any measurable time. But the stronger Christianity is, because of its freedom from doubtful accretions, the better will it be able to guide the feet of humanity into the way of peace.

Let me take a concrete example of the value of the modern principle which I have just re-stated. It is, I suppose, beyond dispute that practically all independent scholars are agreed that

Jesus neither instituted sacraments nor founded a Church. I still remember the bewilderment and almost terror which I experienced when first, some quarter of a century ago, I came across this statement. So slow has been the advance within our own communion of knowledge of critico-historical enquiries into Christian origins that probably a majority, even of the clergy, are to-day ignorant not only of the arguments by which the conclusion has been reached but even of the conclusion itself. Yet how its acceptance would simplify the tangled negotiations as to intercommunion which occupy 'faith and order' conferences! Our Lord preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, gave men the Divine message of eternal life. But He left His followers free to organize themselves, to have bishops, superintendents, elders and so forth, as they thought best. Christ impressed upon His followers the value of prayer and taught them the sacramental principle that God reveals Himself through material things. But He left them free to create forms of worship wherein they should try to draw near to God, to win His grace and to gain spiritual strength to serve Him truly. Words like valid and regular, invalid and irregular, as applied to ministries and sacraments become meaningless in the light of modern conclusions from historico-critical enquiry. And superstitions like transubstantiation, or a spiritual presence in the consecrated elements, for denying which men were burnt at the Reformation, lose all plausibility when the modern conclusions of independent experts are accepted. Some will say that we lose disastrously by admitting the truth of such conclusions. Men have always said that we should lose disastrously by accepting new ideas. Think of the outcry against Darwin's carefully-marshalled arguments and the conclusions which he reached. If you exhume from dull corners of old libraries the musty volumes of controversial theology of two generations ago you will find it clearly set forth that if Darwin were right Adam did not exist. He ate no apple and did not therefore infect the whole human race with sin. 'If no sin, no need of redemption.' We smile to-day at such arguments and the fears which they reveal. But before it is accepted that Jesus neither founded a Church nor instituted sacraments, we shall have like outbursts of unsound argument and controversial bitterness, expressions of the grievous loss good people

feel when deprived of cherished beliefs. And yet will not the gain outweigh the loss? We shall no longer dispute as to which Christian ministries have Divine approval: there will be no barriers to intercommunion: no Christian body will deny that the Society of Friends or the Salvation Army is a true branch of the Church: and pagan intrusions into Christianity from the ancient mystery religions will disappear. Such a prospect sounds like the description of an ecclesiastical millenium, you will say: I agree that it will be a long time in coming.

Such a concrete example shews at once the value of the modernist principle and also the type of progress of which we may hope to be the pioneers. More generally, of course, by accepting the new knowledge won by experts we do our best to prevent the divergence between Christian tradition and educated opinion which at the present time is growing and is thereby bringing the Christian faith into increasing discredit. There are elements in the Christian tradition which the modern world cannot and will not accept because it has been convinced by those best qualified to speak that such elements are untrue. Until we can free Christianity from such associations our task of persuading the world to accept it is far harder than it ought to be.

There is one prophecy that our opponents constantly advance which secretly perturbs some of ourselves. They tell us that if we accept the judgments of experts we shall in the end find ourselves committed to a mass of negations; our religion will have completely evaporated. They urge us therefore to view the mystery of life with the eye of faith, to see more deeply and more truly than the 'mere' expert. Now in such an argument we have, conveniently disguised, the disparagement of human reason so often to be found to-day in apologetic literature. We only need to remind our opponents that the expert is he who without prejudice seeks truth: to that end he uses the Divinely-given powers of the human mind.

Many questions concerning matters of great importance in the Christian tradition are such that fairly certain answers to them can be reached by reason. Such answers we have no right to condemn because they conflict with our religious desires, prejudices, or hopes. As I see the situation, the central affirmations of Christianity are different in character. They are truths

neither demonstrably true nor demonstrably false. The existence of God, His goodness, His purpose in creating man, man's duty and destiny—in all these matters reason, rightly used, leads us towards the Christian position, but it has not the strength of overwhelming compulsion. Faith, the inward disposition of the heart when we seek the highest, justifies our choice of the Christian scheme. The problem of evil, which always tortures the theist, is continuously with us: we must needs rest in our ignorance of God's plan. Grave though the problem may be, for most of us the conviction remains that God's universe is shot through and through with goodness that shall in the end triumph. In Christ we see goodness triumphing over pain and evil. By His triumph we are led to the certainty that His example and His Gospel, if men would only accept them, would bring the world to God: and therein for me is the Incarnation. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.'

Thus I reach my conclusion. The earth in this present era is seething with disorder. There are in Europe many signs of a crumbling civilization. There are countries where truth is scorned, freedom destroyed, and international righteousness mocked. The world needs Christianity. But the Christian tradition contains many things which educated men cannot accept and which they never will again accept unless a new age of barbarism comes on. For the sake of our faith the gulf between new knowledge and old beliefs must be closed by acceptance of the new knowledge. This is the modernist principle; and our conviction is that the Christian faith will be stronger and more persuasive for such purification. We trust that Christianity so strengthened will renew its appeal to humanity and that just as the body of ideas known as modern science has spread throughout the civilized world, so the moral and religious principles which are the essence of Christianity will become universal. Our hope may be fantastic, but we ask: What other hope is there for humanity?

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION

By the Rev. R. B. LLOYD, M.A., Canon of Winchester.

ONE of the brighter parlour games is to decide upon the most important date in history. For Christians the answer is obvious enough, the year in which Jesus was born. But leaving that on one side, there is much amusement to be got out of an attempt to decide what is the next most important date. Seeing that pre-history, as it is called, is now everywhere fashionable, I shall be very much in the fashion if I suggest that the really vital date is the date which cannot appear in any history book at all, since it comes before the days of written history, the date being somewhere about 4000 B.C. Archbishop Ussher, who confidently affirmed that the world was created in B.C. 4004, has nothing to do with my choice. Nor is Adam its hero. The date is chosen because archaeologists, and others who have the right to judge about these matters, are all agreed in assuring us that 6,000 years ago something very momentous and apparently quite sudden happened in the history of the human race. Inertia passed away from men and women, and they wrested from nature initiative. It is as though throughout the long eons of natural evolution the spiritual and mental faculties of mankind had moved so slowly as to seem in retrospect inert. Then, 6,000 years ago, something happened. The slumbering Colossus of mankind awoke, and 'thumbing the sleep from his eyes,' struggled on to his feet, and began the effort to climb higher and ever higher up the slopes of Mount Parnassus. He has been climbing uninterruptedly ever since then, and he is climbing still to-day. Since then, Professor Toynbee assures us that man has put forth no less than some twenty separate civilizing efforts, and to them every race in the world except the Negroid has contributed. As the process goes on uninterruptedly, there is still time for the Negroes to make their contribution.

Plainly then the vital fact of history and its most tremendous hero is the power, force, or whatever it was, that woke the slum-

bering Colossus, it seems on one fine morning, about 6,000 years ago. What was that force or power? To that no exact answer can, of course, be given, which does not mean that various writers have not in fact tried to answer it. It is one of the stock puzzles of the philosophic historian. The Chinese sages have spent themselves in an endeavour to answer precisely such a question. Professor Toynbee torments himself in his efforts to find the answer, and the modern school of psycho-historians, who find little of interest to record during the last 4,000 years and confine almost the whole of their efforts to the period before that, also struggle to see if an answer cannot be given. It is quite clear that an exact answer is beyond the realms of possibility, but all the historians agree thus far that they are bound to assume an agency from without operating upon man, waking him up, and forcing him to climb higher, and re-make the world at a tremendous cost of pain and suffering, so that it is a more perfect world than the world which man knew when he was asleep. But a force that is wholly outside the space-time world inhabited by man is a force which in its nature is spiritual. We who are Christians would give that force the name of God, and that is the name which Professor Toynbee is also inclined to give it. He, for example, chooses the Book of Job as the most perfect allegory of the reality of this spiritual spur to civilizing progress. But the point is that we cannot even begin to account for man's incessant struggle to better himself, to re-create his world and to fashion for himself a society nearer to his heart's dreams, without bringing God, or some sort of equivalent thereof, on to the stage at the very beginning of things. If the effort of men and women during the last 6,000 years can be summed up, as indeed it can, as an effort to achieve a civilized social order, a more civilized form of life, then God, or some alternative spiritual reality, lies at the very heart of it and is responsible for the whole cyclic motion.

It is, however, one thing to assert that the energetic action of a spiritual, supernatural reality, lies behind the immemorial effort of man to better himself. All that is really asserted in this is that this spiritual reality starts man on his journey. It does not follow that He accompanies man. It does not even follow that He is interested in the series of events that He has put into

motion. Consequently the climbing Colossus has tried always to ascend the mountain by two quite separate paths. (If anyone is thinking that this metaphor is getting extremely unwieldy and have a mental picture of a giant with sundered legs, had better be warned. Those who know anything of the school of historians who are more interested in pre-history than in actual history, will remember that the phrase which they most love is the 'Fissured Consciousness.' My giant has got a fissured consciousness, and it extends to his legs.) In other words, he has two conceptions of what he is trying to do, which are so opposed that the two paths up which he painfully but simultaneously toils are on different sides of Parnassus. He is trying to build a civilized society. The various races' conception of what constitutes civilization naturally differs, but the differences between the Indian view and the British view of the civilized life, though great, are not so profound as to be descriptions of a mutually opposed structure of social life. Racial differences are not the point of separation. The point of separation is this: to what extent is God supposed to be the criterion of the value of the society which is to be built? Put that even more simply: are we trying to build the City of Man or the City of God? Is the Civilization we are aiming for Man's Own Show, or is it the City whose builder and maker is God, with Christ set in the centre thereof as its only light? This is the supreme question which has to be answered, and the answer was never so vital as it is to-day.

Here lies the ultimate difference between the two great schools of those who believe in any kind of civilizing progress. There are those who think that Civilization is a goal and a set of values to which religion is, on the whole, irrelevant. To them, the effort of history is to build the City of Man without any kind of help from a supernatural source. They claim history as their sanction, and claim that the effort to build it has been frequently hindered and rarely helped by the official representatives of that spiritual force which is claimed to lie at the heart and the centre of all things. On the other hand, there are those who believe that any dwelling place to be found in this life must have God at its centre and must build itself up on the strength, and the power, and the values of God, because without God there can in the end be no civilization. These too claim

that history supports them, and they have a better warrant for their claim than the former. A godless civilization is a contradiction in terms, and history proves it over and over again.

Civilization is a loose word used to describe almost every kind of life that the speaker happens to think pleasant. It is used also as a term to describe the different kinds of society with which history presents us, as, for example, a man may talk about the Aztec civilization, or the Polynesian civilization, meaning by that any kind of coming together of men and women of particular races, and irrespective of the quality which their community gives to the life which it leads. Such a use of the word does at least take cognizance of one of the first things that civilization is when it is contrasted with barbarism. Civilization is a function of society. Barbarism is a function of separateness. That is to say, one may possibly have a barbarous society, in fact there have been and are many. One can scarcely have a civilized individualism. Without some form of social life civilization is inconceivable.

Here we may pause to note the parallel between this and the religious conception of life. Every Christian teacher knows that the Christian life is the life of fellowship, and that a man cast away on a desert island living in absolute solitude, cannot live the perfectly Christian life, no matter how staunch a saint he may be.

Civilization is the name that we use to designate societies whose life reaches a certain qualitative standard. It contains first of all, its juridical element, for in the civilized society individual life is protected and encouraged by force of public opinion or force of law. The man in the street regards any society as being opposed to civilization in which a single life is not protected in its just rights, as against mob violence or state violence. The reason why few people would be prepared to regard the Germany or the Russia or the Italy of to-day as civilized, is precisely because in the last resort the individual has no guarantee of security as against the state. Possibly, then, one of the first interests of the civilized life is an incorruptible magistracy, for it is hard to see how otherwise individual rights are to be secured and protected.

But, of course, the social side of community life is far more

important for the civilizer. He would be disposed to regard that society as civilized which promoted a way of life that is serene and full of grace, using the term grace in its non-Christian sense; and this gracious life, he would insist, is very largely a function of two qualities which the civilized individual has, namely, aesthetic awareness and the quality of guiding his choice of life more by reason than by instinct. Thus a civilized age is polite and courteous. These it must be, because apart from politeness and courtesy there can be no respect of individuality. Politeness is simply a method of conceding the other man's right to be himself and express himself. It is a society within which a very high place is given to all the arts and to learning, for upon these courtesy, serenity, and gracious living are nourished. Finally, it is a life in which the natural instincts and impulses are not, of course, destroyed, but kept in their proper place by the reason which overrules them all. A proper distinction between the Real Good and the Apparent Good is held and maintained. The man who has no kind of control over his natural appetites can hardly be regarded as a civilized person. To be civilized, reason must take command of the organism and control the separate parts which go to make up the whole.

Now there have been three great societies in the history of the West which have exhibited to the world a way of life not very far removed from this ideal. Their names will leap to our minds. First, of course, there comes Greece in the Periclean Age, then Italy in the days of the Renaissance, and, finally, France in the days of Voltaire. All of these exhibited a life which was ruled by reason, which was, unquestionably, serene and gracious, which was crammed to overflowing with the capacity to create great works of art, and was therefore aesthetically aware. The lives of those who made up the civilized society were protected both by the magistracy, and also by the fact that courtesy and politeness were considered to be good form. Between them they had given Europe a body of thought which, to this day, continues to rule our political thinking; a statement of the Socialist case, which is still the Bible of the faithful; and a wealth of works of art of all kinds, which can never be superseded or fade into the background of the world's artistic consciousness.

Yet they all failed. Each one stood at the brink of a great abyss. The wisest citizens in each civilization knew that they stood there, and within a very brief space of time each one went crashing helplessly into it. The Grecian civilization broke to pieces in the Peloponnesian War. The Italian Civilization broke to pieces in the Civil War that followed upon the Renaissance. The French Civilization was overwhelmed by the revolution which its best citizens saw coming, and which they were able neither to control nor to avert.

This unanimity is indeed impressive. There is no doubt that the secular idea of civilization has had its chance many times in the history of the world, and that always it has failed, and failed badly. Why is this? The reason lay concealed in the comment I made a minute or two ago upon the French Civilization in the age of Voltaire. It was there said that life was protected and encouraged in its individuality. I was careful to say that it was the life of the members of the civilized society. What has to be remembered, and it is the fatal flaw of each one, is that the civilized society comprised only the Upper Ten, and that with the exception of Voltaire and Rousseau, not one of the Upper Ten who enjoyed the benefits of civilization seem to have been at all aware that the benefits they enjoyed themselves ought to be handed down to those upon whose labour they were enabled to enjoy them. Greece, of course, existed on a basis of more or less slave labour. The Italian renaissance works of art were created upon a groundwork of serf and peasant labour which would have been better off if it had been in real servitude. The social condition of the working class in France in the eighteenth century was so grim, and their expectation of justice before the law so minute, that the whole social organism boiled over in the Revolution of 1789.

Civilization without God therefore is undoubtedly capable of flourishing greatly for a time, within a very limited circle of the whole social body, but never exhibits any staying power, and never appears to have the least sense of responsibility or duty to the whole society within which it is set. Civilization apart from God may be gracious, serene, and aesthetically creative; but it remains fundamentally selfish, and by its selfishness it falls.

Plainly, then, there is a quality missing. The civilization

which flourishes only to fall again is not that which we are seeking. We want something more stable, and there must be some quality added which will give stability. The gracious and serene life which reason guides, and is so aesthetically aware as constantly to produce the very greatest works of art, is what we all desire; but we can only have it as a permanency if we enlarge the conception of civilization by adding to it that term which is plainly lacking. The fault, we saw, was selfishness, therefore, the term that must be added is Goodness, and no conception of Goodness is higher than the conception taught by Christ, that goodness is at bottom a quality of which the inspiration is love and the expression is voluntary sacrifice.

Now no one would say that goodness is inconceivable without religion. Pericles was plainly a good man, but no one has yet suggested that he was very religious. But, of course, if civilization is to overcome the profound dangers which lurk within itself as a conception of life, it must add to itself the goodness which is self-sacrifice, for only so is it possible to spread the desire for and attainment of civilization downwards from the apex to the base of the social triangle, and thus build it securely. But sacrificial goodness is logically impossible as apart from that truth about life which religion, above all things, is there to guard and proclaim, namely, that life is immortal, and that the soul of man does not perish at death. For if this is not true, as the Humanists never cease to point out, and quite rightly, self-sacrifice ceases to be a virtue and becomes the most degrading of vices. Without God, it is nothing more nor less than self-murder. If, therefore, civilization cannot be securely founded as apart from the ideal of self-sacrifice, religion is brought on to the scene at once. Christianity does not primarily exist in order to promote virtue, but it cannot long exist unless it does so; and the virtue that it promotes is precisely the love of which the primary expression is sacrifice, which, it proclaims, sets the worshipper free. Civilization therefore must call religion in on its moral side because unless goodness is held to be so much a concomitant necessity of civilization as to crown and include all the other qualities, there is no chance whatever that its achievements will be anything more than very brief flashes in the pan, glorious while they last, but grim in their ruin, and

involving great destruction and great suffering of the civilized society.

But, as we have seen, religion must again be brought on the scene to account for the initial urge to be civilized, which all the historians descry as taking place roughly 6,000 years ago. And if God comes in at the beginning, He comes in no less clearly at the end. For sooner or later the civilizer must ask the question: What is the goal of this effort to be civilized?

Many answers are given to that question. It is tending, say the Communists, towards the triumph of the classless society and the vindication of the proletariat. It is tending, the Fascists say, towards the progressive purification of the racial idea. The secular Humanists, as far as I can discover, have no glimmering of a notion where it is tending. The Christian says it is tending towards the satisfaction in the realm of eternal life, of the God who made it, who implanted the impulse in human hearts to struggle to a higher form of life in this world. St. Paul puts this conception as it applies to the Church in a famous but difficult verse in his letter to the Ephesians. Christ, he said, 'Built the Church in order to present it to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.' Such a presentation can only take place in the eternal world. It is only as we place the ultimate goal of progress outside this world that there is any chance of building up a convincing doctrine of progress which logically holds together. For if the Communist is right in believing that the goal of progress is the classless society, what happens after the goal has been achieved? History then ceases to take place. If the Fascist is right in supposing that the goal of progress is the purification of the racial idea to such an extent that ultimately there is only one race left which has swallowed up all the others, and succeeded in draining out of its blood all impurities, what happens next? Again, history ceases to take place. But by placing the goal of civilization outside this world altogether, you remove it from the dominion of Time and ensure permanence for it. You remove it out of a world which, in any case, is doomed to perish utterly, and place it in the only place where there is any abiding satisfaction. It is for these reasons that an irreligious civilization is a contradiction in terms from which no good can come. History has already condemned it.

THE CHURCH AND THE NEW SCIENCE AND THE NEW PHILOSOPHY

By F. R. TENNANT, F.B.A., D.D., B.Sc.

THE aloofness from institutional Christianity which is widespread at the present time does not seem to have been either caused or fostered, to any considerable extent, by the recent advances in natural science or by tendencies within the sphere of philosophy such as may be said to be of new origination. In so far as it is the outcome of intellectual doubt, it would seem to be more largely due to distrust of beliefs, the foundations of which are the concern of historical and kindred studies rather than of those indicated in the title of this address. And when the aloofness is not only from ecclesiastical doctrines and institutions but takes on the more ultimate form of materialism, atheism, or agnosticism, it appears to be due to the transmission from academic circles of a former generation to the general public of to-day of views which are much more rarely entertained at the present time in circles corresponding to those in which the views originated.

This is most plainly true in the case of materialism, which shall form our first topic. Whereas, half a century ago, many eminent natural philosophers thought that materialism was the kind of metaphysic which physical science implied, or to which science pointed, their successors of the twentieth century—at least such of them as have given publicity to their convictions—are of a different mind. I am now contemplating only what is properly and technically called ‘materialism’: not other doctrines, such as ‘dialectic materialism,’ if I rightly understand it, which seem to go no further than to emphasize the material or physical conditioning of much human thought and voluntary action. Material conditionings of mentality are undoubtedly actual and important; but so long as psychical conditionings are also recognized and allowed to be disparate from them, such so-called materialism is but a one-sided or unbalanced statement of fact, and hardly a deadly foe to religion. Materialism proper, such as is incompatible with religious belief, is the assertion that

mind is but a mode, a property, or (as is more usually affirmed) an effect, of inert matter. The latest reappearance of this doctrine was in the extremer forms of behaviourism, which, some twenty or thirty years ago, endeavoured to explain away the unique character of consciousness and to identify it with something purely physical. But that audacious attempt to provide materialism with an appropriate psychology is already a thing of the past: as if in self-shame, behaviourism of this materialistic kind has for some time hidden its head.

I may remark here that Dr. Stout, in his Gifford Lectures of a few years ago, made it very clear that when material changes are asserted to be the causes of mental events, the alleged causation must be of a quite different kind from that of all such causal actions as the physical sciences describe, and indeed must be identical with creation out of nothing. And there is little doubt that the physicist of to-day would agree with this verdict of the philosopher. We may recall, in this connexion, words in which Sir James Jeans believes himself to be giving utterance not only to his own personal opinion but to the scientific mind of his age: he says that the outstanding achievement of the physics of the twentieth century is not the theory of relativity, nor the splitting of the atom, but the disclosure that physical science has not reached ultimate reality. Thus room is left by science for a metaphysic of the physical world such as is of the opposite extreme to materialism, *viz.* the theory that matter is the appearance to us of some species of the spiritual. Certainly no deliverance of science would need to undergo revision if this were the truth; and perhaps it would be no more shocking to common-sense to be told by the philosopher that a table is really an assemblage of spiritual monads than to be told by the physicist that it is really a swarm of electrons.

So far is science from having given recent encouragement to materialism that idealistic tendencies have of late been manifested in a number of its foremost exponents; and of this trend of thought there are two different kinds. Idealism of the Platonic type, or the doctrine that universals and abstract conceptions such as the mathematician uses are the only real entities, is represented by Jeans, Einstein, and some members of Einstein's school. Theoretical physics, as we know, *approximates* towards

the reduction of the qualitative to the quantitative—colours, *e.g.* give place to wave-lengths : but whereas science has generally preserved its distinctness from pure mathematics by regarding its atoms, etc., to be concrete existents, not a few among the physicists of the present day have advanced to the conviction that neither atoms, nor their constituent electrons, etc., nor the ether, nor the space-time continuum, are real, but only the mathematical symbols and formulae concerning them. This doctrine is of course not dictated by physical science, but lies outside its range. Nevertheless it bespeaks repudiation of the materialistic and mechanical theories on the strength of which the theological interpretation of the world was formerly wont to be ruled out. And similar remarks may be passed on the other type of idealism which has recently found habitation within the scientific mind. Professor Eddington, for instance, interprets Nature in terms of the idealism, or mentalism, of Berkeley. Physical science, doubtless, has nothing to do with the psychological analysis on which Berkeley based his view that material things exist only 'in the mind,' and has added nothing since the eighteenth century to his grounds for that belief ; but if Berkeley's mentalism cannot be extracted out of physical science it is significant that at least one eminent physicist is inclined to read it into science. Perhaps enough has now been said to shew that if materialistically inclined thought is a factor in the causation of the present crisis, it cannot claim support from recent science.

The other main type of non-theistic outlook is agnosticism. In so far as this kind of unbelief is entertained by persons such as have not themselves undertaken a thorough study of logic, theory of knowledge, and other relevant departments of philosophy, but have only the layman's or amateur's acquaintance with these subjects, it may be assigned, in all probability, to either of two sources. It is perhaps in many cases the consequence of the more widespread and fuller recognition of the evil aspect of the world which has been forced upon this generation by the Great War and its after-effects. In other words, the problem of evil, as an obstacle to belief in God and in divine providence, has been thrust upon the attention of all classes of men ; and doubtless agnosticism and atheism have thereby been

engendered in some people that otherwise would have retained the Christian faith. Here is no new discovery : the problem of evil is almost as old as philosophy itself ; but recent happenings have brought the ancient difficulty, the crux of theism, home to men's minds in a measure perhaps unparalleled before. I know of no newer thought concerning theodicy than the explanation of evil as the by-product of an order which, as a whole, is essential to the realization of the higher values—rationality and morality : an explanation which goes much further than any other to account for the emergence of evil in God's world.

Another probable cause of such agnosticism as may be rife among our people is the filtering down into popular literature of views which formerly were advocated in the writings of specialists or of the learned, but which are no longer avowed within that higher circle in the same form or on the same grounds as now suffice for their acceptance by the larger public. Thus, if an increased adoption of the agnostic attitude is a factor in the crisis with which we are concerned, it does not seem to be the outcome of any newly-originated tendency in science or philosophy. I will therefore not enlarge upon the more popular form of agnosticism which, so far as I am acquainted with it, appears to be an echo of doctrines that used to be more plausible than they now are, save for further indicating its nature by comparison with the more recent type of agnosticism which is to be met with in many living professors of philosophy and science.

Philosophers and philosophically equipped exponents of science such as call themselves agnostics do not nowadays regard the alleged supersensible realities which are the concern of theology as the only kind as to which it is impossible to have knowledge, while allowing that other alleged supersensible realities lie within the bounds of the knowable. As we have just seen, recent science confesses agnosticism as to the ultimate nature of the material world. They rather hold that there is *no* world-view, or theory as to the origin, the ground, and the real nature of the world, which admits of rigorous proof and is thereby entitled to the name of 'knowledge,' in its strict sense. And, however this may be, it is certain that no one such theory has come near to commanding universal consent. Unlike much of the agnosticism of last century, which seems to be the form which

popular agnosticism takes to-day, the newer academic type is not based on a sharp antithesis alleged to exist between theism as a belief and science as positive knowledge, as if religion were a matter of credulity and superstition and empirical science were a matter of certainty—the indisputable deliverances of sense linked not otherwise than by logical implications. Such a positivist conception of science as used to be the essential counterpart of agnosticism has become obsolete. The antithesis is now drawn between belief—of whatever degree of reasonableness, and with regard to objects within whatever sphere of thought—on the one hand, and strictly demonstrable or logically certifiable knowledge, on the other hand. And it is solely because natural theology and theistic arguments do not seem to the agnostic to possess this rigid demonstrability that he is unable to accept them. If this attitude, which is certainly that of some typical agnostics, be, as I believe it to be, the general attitude of academic agnosticism nowadays, the situation presents some features that are of interest and significance in connexion with the present crisis.

In the first place one may venture to say that there is no great gulf fixed between this type of agnostic and one class of theists. I must only say 'one class,' because theists differ among themselves as to the cogency of various kinds of argument for the existence of God. There are some who hold one or more of the classic 'proofs,' such as the ontological or the cosmological, to be sound in spite of the criticism passed upon them by Hume and Kant; others discard these proofs as fallacious, but maintain that some argument based exclusively on moral considerations can establish the theistic conclusion with certainty; another school rejects all these arguments, and indeed all natural theology, and bases its science on alleged unique data which they assert to be immediately apprehended in religious experience. And there remains a certain number—as yet, perhaps, a minority—who have become convinced that by none of these several lines of approach can we arrive at knowledge, in the strict sense of logically certified belief. In so far as this particular issue is concerned, such theists as these last have no need to reject the title of agnostic, in the precise sense in which I have been representing it to designate those who at the present time profess

academic doubt. Such theists are differentiated from other agnostics, in this sense of the word, in that they are convinced of the truth of some beliefs, admittedly lacking logical certification, whereas their brethren are in some way inhibited from adopting the theistic creed as their guide of life. The non-theistic agnostic takes towards theism the attitude, 'I will not believe where I do not know.' Now, as I have said before, the non-theistic agnostic of to-day, unlike his predecessor, does not regard inductive science as logically certified belief—I will presently submit that if he is abreast of recent knowledge he cannot do so—yet he does not find himself inhibited from believing its pronouncements so sanguinely that he is prepared to act upon them at any and every hour of the day. In observing this fact I am not insinuating a charge of inconsistency: it remains to be inquired whether or not there is a good reason for this apparent favouritism. Nor am I indulging in argumentation of the fruitless *tu quoque* kind. I have a more serious purpose in view, *viz.* to make it plain that science presupposes an act of faith, and in that respect does not differ from theology, and, further, to argue that in another respect also there is continuity rather than disparateness between the scientific and the theological interpretations of the world. If such continuity should be found to exist, the disclosure should possess significance for theistic apologetics in this age of doubt and distrust of authority. The recent advance in philosophy which has brought this continuity to light deserves to be more widely known, and its importance to be more fully appreciated, than seems as yet to be the case: I will therefore give a brief account of it.

After much discussion by the logicians of last century it became clear that we have no logical right to believe in the universal and necessary truth of any inductively reached conclusion unless some premisses, such as cannot be established empirically, be true. What these presuppositions exactly are it proved difficult to ascertain; but during the present century the problem has been solved. It has been found that the kind of induction which constitutes the essence of scientific method presupposes the truth of two independent propositions which together are equivalent to the vague principle of uniformity in which they were fused and concealed. The one of these propositions is that

the physical world is built up of but few kinds of ultimate substances, all the instances of any one class of which are exactly alike and absolutely permanent. The other asserts that, in interaction, each substance produces its effect independently of any other cause, *i.e.* causes obey the parallelogram-law. The particular content of these fundamental propositions, however, is not so important for us as the obvious fact that they are neither self-evident, or immediately intuitable, nor demonstrable either empirically or *a priori*. They are postulates. The eminent logicians to whose penetrating insight we owe the isolation and precise statement of these propositions tell us that they cannot be logically certified, and assign to them the logical status of probability. Their probability, it is further allowed, is not of the kind which admits of numerical expression, or of calculability. But there remains the question whether the probability, accredited to these postulates on which all inductive science is ultimately based, is of the kind which alone is accounted probability by the science of logic; and the answer to be given to this question is a matter of significance in connexion with the relation in which natural theology stands to inductive science.

We are taught by the logician that probability is not an intrinsic quality of a proposition, though we commonly speak of it as if it were. It is a relation—regarded by some as a purely logical and objective relation—between some one proposition or group of propositions, and another proposition or group of propositions. In other words, probability of the logical kind, when attributed to a proposition, is always relative to some datum, some more ultimate or more certain proposition. But the probability ascribed to the postulates we are now considering cannot be of this relational kind, since we know of no more ultimate propositions to which they can stand in relation. We cannot conceive how direct knowledge of such ultimate certainties could be possible, and it is admitted on all hands that actually we lack such knowledge. I think therefore that we may conclude, without any fear of refutation, that if we care to retain the word ‘probability’ in reference to the postulates of induction, it must bear an entirely different sense from that which it bears in logic abstracted from psychology. The probability must rather be allogical or psychological. By that I mean that it con-

sists in a capacity to evoke sanguine trust and belief, such as are psychologically motivated and pragmatically 'verified,' as to *credenda* that lack logical certification. The postulates are suggested, though not dictated, by Nature; and, the more thoroughly Nature has been investigated and her regularity been disclosed, the stronger has grown the convincedness as to their truth. No practical investigator in the field of natural science dreams of behaving as a sceptic towards inductive demonstrations, though he may be fully aware that the pragmatic verification which his inductions may receive already presupposes the uncertified induction-postulates and is therefore, from the logician's point of view, circular and alogical. But the venture to hope, believe, and trust, when one does not know, is precisely what we mean by 'faith.' And the outcome of this discussion of an apparently academic problem is the clear disclosure of the truth that inductive science ultimately rests on faith; that probability—and probability of the psychological, not the logical, kind—is not only the guide of practical life but also of science and of all the presumptive knowledge which in our secular affairs we deem most worth having. In view of the recent emergence into clear light of this hitherto vaguely apprehended truth it seems to me that the wisest line for the apologist of theism to take, when confronted with agnosticism, is to emphasize such continuity as there is between theology and science. So far I have only touched upon such continuity as exists in virtue of their springing from a common root, *viz.* faith. I will presently submit that there is no disparateness between them in respect of the methods which they respectively pursue in their endeavours to render the world intelligible; but meanwhile I may interpolate a word concerning the other side of the equation which I have been establishing. If it be desirable just now to bring home to the agnostic the fact that science has its faith-element, it is likewise expedient to make it explicit that the theological doctrines which we Churchmen are concerned to commend and propagate are matters of faith rather than of dogmatic knowledge. It is possible that one obstacle, if a relatively small or infrequent one, might thus be removed which hinders the intellectual acceptance, whether by the Greek or by the barbarian, of our message; for some minds shrink with aversion from pronouncements which

appear to them to be unduly dogmatic. Confronted as we are to-day with widespread doubt, it may be wise to emphasize the distinction between belief and knowledge; to temper our discretion in commending the faith that is in us with the valour to confess in plain terms that it is faith and not sight by which we walk. After all, our creeds begin with the words 'I believe,' not 'I know.' Asking less, we might perhaps gain the more, at least among the free-thinkers. The old *lumen naturale*, the infallibility of which was presupposed by the rational theology of past generations, has turned out to be a fiction, and more recent substitutes for it are not calculated to prove persuasive to the critically-minded. It no more becomes theology to appear dogmatic in a higher degree than it has the right to be than it does to flee, as if panic-stricken, to the refuge of irrational certitude or 'enthusiasm' such as has reappeared in several diverse forms in these latter days. In the interests of truth, the craving for absolutely certain *credenda* and infallible pronouncements should be repressed or disciplined rather than fostered or pandered to. Whenever theology offers itself as neither more nor less than reasonable belief, even the agnostic, I find, invariably treats it with respect.

But, it will doubtless be asked, how will this surrender of the claim to certainty affect those who believe, or fain would believe, the doctrines of theology? It has often been asserted that Butler's principle, 'probability is the guide of life,' fails to meet the needs and demands of religious faith, since religious faith must regard its *credenda* as certain and not merely probable, if it is to stand the stress of life's trials. But such statements as this confound two entirely different things: *viz.* certainty, as an objective and logical quality predicable of some propositions, and certitude, which is a particular state or attitude of mind. No sanguine believer, such as Bishop Butler himself, reacts to his own *credenda* as if they were merely probable, because he is convinced that they are true; but for all that he may be able to recognize that the logical grounds of his beliefs (*credenda*), which are distinct from the subjective causes of his believing, lack certainty or rigid demonstrability, and possess no more than reasonableness and probability. Private convincedness may be the guide of an individual's life, but, from

the point of view of common or public knowledge and logic, the beliefs by which life is guided may be but probable. From the latter point of view, conversely, an individual's certitude or convincedness is but of biographical interest and has no significance for logic or science. Butler's principle, in short, has no relation to convictions, which are states of mind, but only to logical grounds; and the great bishop is a standing witness to the possibility of combining the most sanguine convincedness with recognition of the lack of certainty of the *credenda* as to which he is convinced. And, as we have seen, this combination is not confined to believers in the doctrines of theology: every scientific investigator is sanguinely convinced as to the truth of the induction-postulates, and could prosecute no physical research unless he were, though he must recognize that those postulates are lacking in certainty or demonstrability.

If, in view of the present situation and the prevalent impatience of dogma, it is timely to accentuate these distinctions between certainty and certitude, knowledge and reasonable belief, and kinds of probability, it is also timely and expedient to emphasize the continuity between inductive science and natural theology which progress in relevant knowledge during the last few decades has enabled us more clearly to discern and has authorized us to affirm. So far we have given attention to the greater explicitness with which it has recently been disclosed that science walks by faith, like theology, believing where it cannot prove, and confessing that it cannot furnish a coercively or rigorously proved reason for the hope that is in it, but only a reasonable rather than a rational one. But there is more continuity between these two departments of thought than I have as yet mentioned. Science postulates what is requisite in order to make the world amenable to thought concerning its structure, its elements and their orderedness according to quantitative law. Natural theology uses the same method, but applies it to a wider sphere of data, including orders of fact of which it is not the business of the physical sciences to take account. That things affect us, eliciting valuation and realizing values, is as much a fact and a revelation of their nature as that they have such and such physical properties and chemical composition; and that mental events and voluntary actions in like manner

evoke appreciation is as much a fact as that they happen. Hence the realm of values—as much a part or an aspect of reality as the aspect to which science necessarily confines itself, and equally demanding the consideration of philosophy whose business is to see things whole. This is not an occasion for constructing a theistic argument, but I may go so far as to observe that when we contemplate the various physical sciences as a whole the most impressive generalization which they provoke is that in the evolutionary process by which the part of the universe of which we have knowledge has become a cosmos, or a theatre of rational and moral life, an astounding number of interadaptations of apparently independent streams of causation, suggestive of design rather than chance or ‘incredible good-luck,’ has been somehow brought about. That a non-intelligent world produces intelligent beings and makes itself unintelligible to them, and embodies no purpose yet abundantly shews the signs of doing so, is, as we must admit to the agnostic, a logical possibility, because conceivable in the abstract without self-contradiction; but it is hardly a clear and reason-satisfying conception in which the inquisitive mind of man can find intellectual repose. But I am now only referring to this cumulatively theological and moral argument for the purpose of illustrating the assertion that, in passing to the only reasonable explanation of the world and man, theism is but carrying a stage further, and to a stage demanded by facts which the sciences severally do not come in sight of, the same kind of explanatory principle which inductive science itself makes use of in order to account for the world possessing that kind of intelligibility which science pragmatically discovers it to have. There is no disparity, nor even discontinuity, between science of the world and theistic interpretation of the world. I do not think that the cultured agnostic of to-day would seriously demur to this conclusion, though he would negate the assertion that theism can be rigorously proved.

If, as I have been representing, the apologist for a religious interpretation of the world is authorized by the science and philosophy of to-day to preach the continuity between science and natural theology, it may next be observed that some theists would go further. Moral arguments have, since Kant’s time, been commonly accredited with more cogency than teleological

arguments, and with independence of the deliverances of any science other than that of morals. Yet they all stand confronted with the plain truth that the value of goodness is one thing and the permanent existence of the good is another, or that something ought to be does not in the least imply that it will be. Before we can argue from the present forthcomingness of moral ideals and aspirations to their fulfilment in a supersensible world we require reason to believe that the universe respects them or is calculated to perpetuate them. So far as ethics, or a pure science of values, can know, the moral status and progress of man may be but a transient episode in a blind or meaningless cosmic evolution: no moral truth would be shaken if we knew that our world would be deleted to-morrow. So, unless theism be previously established, we have no reason to believe that the highest good is destined to be realized. But the theoretical sciences, and they alone, do supply grounds for reasonable hope that the world is designed and that its *raison d'être* is to be a theatre of moral life. They, and they only, therefore, can furnish the necessary premiss from which the moralist can deduce the existence of God and the future life, or the reasonable guarantee which can redeem religious beliefs from groundlessness. The sciences from which certain schools would isolate theology thus afford the only indisputable facts by building on which theology can become a body of reasonable belief for the guidance of life. If this be so, we must not only preach the continuity of theology with science but also the dependence of theological belief on our scientific probabilities concerning the world and man.

Inasmuch as the subject allotted to me is the bearing of current science and philosophy upon the religious situation, I have been confined to discourse concerning natural theology, or ethical theism in its generality. But in concluding this address I would add a few words in connexion with Christianity in particular, and express the opinion that in the present distress there is a call upon Churchmen to bring to the front, so to say, in their teaching, a component of Christian truth which has perhaps not always received its due proportion of emphasis in the preaching of the Christian gospel.

The Christian revelation has generally been regarded from the earliest time as consisting not so much in Christ's teaching

concerning God and His relations to the world and men, or in His life as an embodiment of that teaching, as in beliefs as to Christ's consubstantiality with the Father, His death as a mysterious conditioning of God's forgiveness, sacraments as extensions of His incarnation, the divine guidance of the Church, and so on. This body of interpretative doctrine has usually been accounted the 'essence' of Christianity; and upon it and its expression in institutions attention has been wont to be concentrated. Without doubt it is this department of religious belief that is nowadays most commonly regarded with suspicion, at least by the more educated and critical; and some of the causes of the current sceptical attitude towards it are evident. The average man has of late come to share in some measure the historian's grasp of the distinction between history and historiography, and to apply it to the gospels. The ancient criterion of the truth of Christian doctrine — apostolicity or oecumenicity — has been replaced by that of foundation in fact and correspondence with fact; and the authority of fact has come to be accounted the sole authority, in theology as well as in science. The widespread indifference to ecclesiastical doctrine and institutions which is of grave concern to the Church to-day is doubtless often motivated by less worthy causes than these reasons for distrust; but in cases of honest doubt the severance from Christian fellowship may be due to deficiency of emphasis, in the discharge of the teaching-office of the Church, upon the other component of Christianity than the body of developed doctrine based on *interpretations* of facts and religious experience — I mean the teaching of our Lord Himself concerning God, God's world, and God's children.

We may, in this connexion, recall the fact that some two centuries ago a search was undertaken, chiefly on the initiative of Englishmen, for a theology such as might be regarded as catholic, not in the narrower sense of common to Christians, but in the wider sense of common to mankind, because asserting only what human reason and conscience can universally apprehend and believe. These free lances, guided by the Renaissance habit of mind, exalted verifiability above oecumenicalness as the final criterion of truth, and thus can be said to be the founders of modernity in the sphere of theology as distinct from that of

ecclesiastical administration and institutional practice. They were the first to exercise in theology proper the intellectual and moral rights for which the Reformation had stood when it rejected doctrines, etc., not because they were Roman but because they fell short of what reason and conscience demanded. Had these deists, who would more happily be called rational theists, recognized that what they were commending as the irreducible minimum of certain belief was but an already crumbling philosophy, whereas in the life and teaching of Christ there lay to hand a religious revelation of the very type that they were seeking, in that it addressed itself to common reason and conscience alone, these men might have rediscovered a lasting foundation. For the personal religion and teaching of Christ concerning God, man, and the world, not only stands clear of perishable and dubitable elements but also realizes the true relation—the personal and moral relation—between man and God. Such religion suffices to promote the actualization of all the good that is potentially present in human nature, and exalts to the plane of religion the truth which natural theology finds insculpted on the world. This religion is independent of all disputations as to dates and authorships, unverifiable testimonies and traditions, dubious interpretations, and metaphysical conceptions such as no longer seem to possess clarity or explanatory value; and it affords no lodgement for either pre-moral relics or vain superstitions. What a man calls his religion is often really a complex of many loyalties, and some of its secondary ingredients may usurp the place of the primary, so that trivialities come to count for more than the sublimities. Pre-eminent among these various loyalties should be the truth-loyalty; and that it was the merit of the deists to emphasize, whatever were their faults and defects. And it is this loyalty which causes in many to-day the desire to see a larger measure of attention given, than has been throughout the history of organized Christianity, to Christ's plain teaching—as profound and universal as it is simple. With such a reform achieved, we should perhaps cease to hear of 'the failure of Christianity,' and should see less of the aloofness of the Englishman, with his common-sense, his moral earnestness, his religious aptitude, and his respect for truth, from the institutional religion of his land.

THE CHURCH AND MODERN HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM

By Professor S. H. HOOKE, M.A., B.D.

THE title of the subject assigned to me suggests a division into two parts. First it seems to demand some account of the most recent advances in knowledge, or modifications of previous positions, in the field of Biblical studies. In the second place it seems to call for a discussion of the effect of these changes upon the teaching and activity of the Church, or at least that part of it which is represented by the Church of England.

I.

For the sake of clearness in exposition the material of the first part of our discussion is divided into three heads, although it is difficult to avoid a certain amount of overlapping in the treatment.

(1) *Archaeology*. In the field of archaeology and prehistory a number of important advances have been made whose bearing on biblical studies, though indirect for the most part, are nevertheless of considerable significance. First of all it has become possible to take a general view of the whole of the early period of the growth of civilization up to the beginning of the second millennium B.C., when history begins to separate itself from prehistory. The result of such a general view is to establish the existence of two important crises in this early period of the growth of civilization. The first is what Professor Gordon Childe has called the Neolithic Revolution, a change in the mode of existence by which man passed from the food-gathering stage to the stage of food-producing and stock-breeding. A brief summary of the results of the Neolithic Revolution in the life of man is contained in the following passage from Professor Childe's book *Man Makes Himself*: 'The new forces controlled by man as the result of the neolithic revolution and the

knowledge gained and applied in the exercise of the new crafts must have reacted upon man's outlook. They must have modified his institutions and his religion.'

The second crisis, whose effects were deep and far-reaching, is described by Professor Childe as the Urban Revolution. As the result of this revolution the self-sufficing communities of food-producers created by the first revolution were transformed into cities or city-states with elaborate temples and ritual systems demanding the existence of various classes of persons possessing special kinds of knowledge or skill. There was an immediate and striking increase of population, and of intercourse between the new centres of civilization. This revolution was taking place simultaneously in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Indus valley, and its effects upon the field with which biblical studies are immediately concerned may be observed in a variety of ways which we have not time to consider in detail.

The second contribution made by archaeology to the advance of knowledge in this field consists in the discovery of important new documentary evidence. The most important of these discoveries was the finding and decipherment of the Ras Shamra tablets, written in a new form of cuneiform alphabetic script, and in a language which has been described by experts as an early and hitherto unknown Canaanite dialect. The texts, dating from about the middle of the second millennium B.C., have provided us with the first contemporary evidence concerning the pantheon, the mythology, and the ritual system of Canaan about the time when the Hebrews were beginning their settlement in Canaan. The significance of these texts for the historical criticism of the Old Testament will be referred to later. The Ras Shamra tablets may be said to have done for the religion of Canaan what the Tell el-Amarna Letters did for the political history of the country.

A third valuable contribution from the archaeological and excavational side was the discovery at the site of the ancient Lachish of a series of ostraca containing the correspondence between the military authorities of Lachish and those of the neighbouring cities at the time of the Neo-Babylonian invasion of Palestine shortly before the fall of Jerusalem in 586. These letters provided valuable corroboration of the historical narra-

tives dealing with this period in the second book of *Kings* and in the book of *Jeremiah*. They also furnished interesting light on the vocabulary and script of the Hebrews at this time.

The last point to be referred to under this head is the advance made in the decipherment of the various so-called 'Hittite' scripts. A number of legal and historical texts are now available for study, and we now know that the general Biblical term 'Hittite' embraces various racial groups, differing in language, script, and in the date of their settlement in Asia Minor and Canaan. A fact which may have important bearing on Biblical studies is pointed out by A. Götze in his *Helhiter, Hurriter und Assyrier*. It is that the beginnings of true historical writing, sharply distinct from the annalistic and mythological style of Babylonian and Assyrian historical documents, is to be found in the Hittite historical material, and he suggests that an explanation of the difference observable in Hebrew historical writing may be due to influence from this source. In this connection it should be added that through the decipherment of the tablets from Nuzi and Kirkuk in N.W. Mesopotamia, the importance of the Hurrians has been recognized for the early history of Canaan, and material from this source has been used to illuminate incidents in the sagas of the Patriarchs of *Genesis*.

(2) *Literary Criticism*. In the field of literary criticism the principal change to be noticed in recent years is the tendency to shift the focus of attention from purely literary methods of source-criticism. There are those who hopefully suppose that the analysis of the Pentateuch into its well-known sources has been overthrown. This has not happened, nor is it likely to happen. But what has taken place is that a process, similar to the somewhat over-emphasized Form-criticism of the Gospels, is directing the attention of Old Testament students to differences in form within the constituent elements of the various sources, with results which carry the analysis of those sources a stage further. The most important of these studies is Professor Alt's analysis of the Pentateuchal legislation into the two main groups of *casuistic* and *apodeictic* types of legislation. The former of these he assigns to the Canaanite element in Hebrew legislation borrowed and assimilated by the Hebrews after their settlement in Canaan. In the latter he sees the type

of legislation which the Hebrew people brought with them when they came into the land.

Another example of this method of approach is to be found in Mowinckel's *Psalmestudien*, in which he applies the comparison of Babylonian magical and ritual formulae to the discovery of similar forms in the Psalms.

This will suffice to illustrate the tendency to move on from purely literary criteria to the consideration of forms, with the result that, while the general framework of the older critical position remains unchanged, new and important conclusions are being drawn from the discovery of different blocks of material within the sources themselves.

(3) *Historical Criticism*. Although the methods of literary and historical criticism have now long been closely interconnected, it is possible to see certain significant changes at work in the historical approach to the contents of the Bible. The first of these is concerned with what we might call the philosophical preconceptions of the historical approach. It is a change of distinct religious significance. All along the line, not only in the domain of historical science but also in the field of anthropology and biology, a limitation is taking place in the application of the concept of evolution. The Wellhausen combination of literary and historical criticism yielded a reconstruction of Old Testament history which rested on a thorough-going evolutionary view of history. Whereas one might say that now, to use a convenient phrase, an apocalyptic view of history is taking the place of an evolutionary view. While the continuity of history, in the main, must be recognized, it is difficult to regard the prophetic protest which began in the eighth century B.C. and exercised such a potent influence on the subsequent history of religion as evolving from the earlier religion of the Hebrews. It is rather in the nature of a catastrophic event, a break in continuity, or, to borrow a biological term, a mutation.

The second of the changes in historical criticism, reinforcing the effect of the first, has been largely due to the immense increase in our knowledge of the religious pattern of the ancient Near East at the time when the Hebrews and their culture began to emerge upon the stage of history. This change may be considered from two angles. In the first place it has become fairly

clear from the collation of earlier material with newer evidence, such as that of the Ras Shamra texts, for instance, that the urban revolution consolidated the various magical practices already in existence into one great ritual pattern, with local differences but possessing common characteristics, the central importance of the king-god, the death and resurrection of the god, the sacred marriage, and a common body of myth representing the story of the sacred drama.

In the second place it has also come to be recognized that the early pre-prophetic religion of the Hebrews, like that of their neighbours the Canaanites, conformed in the main to this pattern, and that the sudden and dramatic emergence of the protest of the eighth century prophets against this whole ritual system can hardly be regarded as evolution but rather as revolution, due to a new experience and conception of God.

In comparing the results of recent studies in the field of Old Testament criticism with those of research in the New Testament field we meet with the paradox of a decrease of certainty in the latter as against an increase of light in the former.

The effect of the application of the Form-criticism method to the Gospels, going behind the results of Synoptic criticism, has been to introduce a much greater degree of uncertainty with regard to the tradition of the original form of the teaching of Jesus, and a still greater uncertainty concerning the sequence of the events of His life. Even in that part of the Gospel narrative relating to the events of the last week modern historical criticism has introduced the note of uncertainty. Guignebert's *Jesus* and Professor Lightfoot's recent Bampton Lectures may serve as outstanding examples of this tendency, although Guignebert dismisses Form-criticism somewhat summarily.

In general the trend of historical criticism in this field seems to be towards the view that the theological pre-occupation of the early Christian Church has so transformed the original historical material as to make it impossible ever to recover the original form of the tradition.

This tendency has affected the question of the Apocalyptic element in the Gospels, and while Schweitzer's view, with modifications, still finds support, there is an increasing reluctance to accept the Messianic consciousness of Jesus and its implications,

and an increasing tendency to attribute the Apocalyptic elements in the Synoptic gospels to the expectations of the early Church.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of recent New Testament study, and indeed of Biblical studies in general, especially on the Continent, is the tendency to regard the historical aspect of the Bible as of secondary importance for religion, and to return to the ancient position of Origen and the conception that the spiritual value of the Bible belongs to the plane of what has been called *meta-history*, and is independent of its historical validity. We shall return to this question in the second part of our discussion.

This is a very brief outline of what seem to be the principal changes in the field of Biblical criticism during the last decade.

II.

It is much more difficult, especially for a layman, to attempt the second task which is required by the title of this paper. Anything here said can only be regarded as the expression of the personal attitude of a single student of the history of religion. It will perhaps be easier to examine the bearing of the various new elements mentioned in the first part of this paper upon the teaching and attitude of the Church before attempting to draw any general conclusions, if that should be possible.

First it seems that there is something to be learnt from an examination of the nature of the earliest crises in human history, now that they begin to be clearly distinguished for the first time, and one is reminded of the danger of considering the history of the growth of religious ideas and practices in isolation from the material circumstances which conditioned them.

The religion of the early food-producing communities consisted of a comparatively simple body of practices directed to the end of controlling the environment and of securing a good life for the community. It represents the emergence of man's belief in his own power to control the external forces of nature, and of an organized attempt to do so.

The second crisis or revolution gave to religion its first great organized pattern. King, god, temple, priesthood, became the centre of a vast network of activities of which religion was the mainspring. The great ritual pattern then developed still sur-

vives in unsuspected forms in the practice of the Church to-day.

Then came what we might venture to call the third crisis, the rise among an insignificant people of the ancient world of a movement of protest against all that the second revolution had created. This movement, which had an importance for the history of religion out of all proportion to the place of the Hebrew people in the ancient world, seems to represent the progressive attempt to free the religious spirit, that is, the expression of man's sense of spiritual values, from its dependence upon the form which had been imposed upon it by the second revolution. Like all protests the prophetic movement tended to ignore the fact that many things in the pattern which it desired to destroy were based on fundamental elements in human nature. The inevitable result was a compromise, and while the prophetic movement made possible the highest expression of spiritual values which has appeared in history in the life and death of Jesus, the elements in the ritual pattern retained by the compromise passed in a changed form into the early Christian movement and helped to determine the shape of the organization and ritual of the Church.

The bearing of the various changes in emphasis arising from new documentary evidence can be briefly stated. It tends to strengthen the position with regard to the Bible already held by that section of the Anglican Church represented by the Modern Churchmen's Union, as well as by many other members of the Christian Church. This position is that the Bible is first of all a collection of the literature of the Hebrew people, and that its spiritual value can only be fully realized by the use of all the processes of criticism and of all sources of knowledge relating to the conditions of its growth. For instance, one of the results of new evidence has been to establish the nature of early Hebrew religion and its relation to the contemporary religious pattern, a result which gives greatly increased significance to the spiritual value of the prophetic movement.

The last two tendencies mentioned in our discussions of recent changes seem to offer, in different ways, a challenge to the Church. The swing away from an evolutionary conception of history, and, one might add, from the conception of economic determinism, has brought again into prominence an apocalyptic

view of history, a view which is always a challenge to complacency, a recognition of the imminence of judgment. On the other hand, the tendency to abandon the quest for historical truth in the field of Biblical studies as having little or no spiritual value, and to look rather upon the Bible as a divine whole, an act of God in which God finds us, seems to present both a challenge and a danger. It is a challenge to the Church to put forward the Bible as the vehicle of an immediate experience of God, but it carries with it the danger of forgetting that spiritual values can only be expressed in human life and on the plane of history, a danger which has more than once been illustrated in the course of the history of the Church.

All the subjects dealt with at the present conference are being envisaged in terms of crisis, that is, from an apocalyptic viewpoint, but it is hard to estimate the nature of a crisis when we are involved in it. It is comparatively easy to do it afterwards, but then it is too late.

These concluding remarks, then, are merely a very imperfect attempt to express an individual estimate of the nature of the present crisis in relation to the subject of this paper.

In the first place, it seems very doubtful whether the challenge of the present crisis can be met along the lines of the Barthian position referred to above. It is no longer possible for the Church to hold the sacred book on high and say, 'Here, and here only is the record of God's activity in the world. It cannot be judged by you, but you must be judged by it. These holy writings alone are able to make you wise unto salvation.' The great majority of thoughtful people to-day have been brought to regard the collection of documents which constitute the Bible from an entirely different point of view. For such people these documents contain the record of a section of the whole history of the human race. The record must be studied in relation to that whole history of which it forms an integral part and apart from which its true perspective cannot be grasped. Moreover the record must be subjected to all those tests of authenticity and historicity which historians have learnt to apply to other similar sources. The result of such a comparison and such criticism has been to shew that the documents of which the Bible consists are of varying historical and spiritual value, and that the

history which they imperfectly record cannot be separated from the rest of the history of the development of civilization in the ancient East.

But it also shews that this history contains the record of something of unique importance, the story of a movement of the human spirit which has no parallel elsewhere in human history; it shews that the Christian Church in its many forms is, from the historical point of view, the embodiment of this movement and its continuation. Hence the peculiar nature of the present crisis seems to lie in the fact that for those who have come to this point of view the whole movement of the human spirit is seen from the beginning to assume the appearance of a succession of crises of a catastrophic character, and not of a clearly-defined evolutionary process. The transition from one crisis to another seems to present the appearance of continual death and re-birth. Both the Church and the Book which constitutes its credentials have come to be regarded, not as the final expression of the divine nature and purpose, but as a temporary form of the whole movement of the divine life in the world, a movement of whose beginning and of whose goal we have no certain knowledge.

We have been forced to widen our conception of what is meant by revelation, to recognize that the quantum theory may be as much a revelation of the divine as the Gospel of St. John. We are being compelled, against our will perhaps, to recognize that much of the present unrest is due to movements such as have brought crises to the birth in the past. We seem to be faced with a crisis of which one element consists of a swing away from an over-insistence on individual values to a fresh emphasis on collective values, in the light of which a very serious degree of re-valuation may have to take place.

Hence it may be that the Church and the individuals composing it are now being faced with the necessity of accepting that critical process of death and re-birth through which some new form of divine life in the world may find expression. History shews that such acceptance is never accomplished without struggle. Death is never acceptable, but it is the inevitable condition of new life.

‘Till Time, the hidden root of change, updries,
Are Birth and Death inseparable on earth;
For they are twain yet one, and Death is Birth.’

THE CHURCH AND THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION

By Canon T. GUY ROGERS, M.C., B.D., Rector of Birmingham.

THE Church as an institution has lately acquired a new interest in the eyes of the public. In the language of journalism it has become news and is therefore continually in the news. This is due largely to increasing tension—tension between an institution which is rediscovering the Gospel and the State which is seeking to discover its soul.

To those of us who have grown weary with arid discussions on purely ecclesiastical matters this new fact about the Church has presented it in a new and attractive light. We have become more than intrigued. We are conscious of a new and passionate interest in what may befall the Church at any moment. It is as if we had passed from a dissecting room with its melancholy occupations into a world of living men. This eager Church, which is at grips in so many places with a new and daring secularism, is worth belonging to, living for and even conceivably worth dying for. The days of our apathy are over. The pursuit of truth which has always ranked higher with us as Modernists than the shaping of the institution, now draws us into the very vortex of the institutional life itself. We are compelled to revalue the institution in the light of the present threats to its existence, and through the vigour of its members to appreciate more fully the truths for which it stands.

If anyone had told me in my younger days that I should be writing this about the Church I should hardly have believed him. For subconsciously I have distrusted the Church as the stepmother of the Gospel, and I have seen the priests as the potential murderers of the prophets. And I am well aware that in the reactions of the moment when our hearts are thrilled by the stories of gallant Confessional Christians, these earlier doubts and suspicions are still wholesome medicine for the enthusiast who writes about the Catholic Church. It is always

groups of people within the Church rather than the Church as a whole who preserve the authentic witness of the Gospel. But at a moment when the Church is shedding its dead branches and being persecuted in its living ones—when courage and action characterize its members who are on their trial in a secular world, we may be excused for a less critical and more emotional admiration of the Church.

I confess that this admiration goes out, in my own case, in larger measure to those branches of the Church which are in revolution themselves or living in the midst of revolution than to the Church which is so static—apparently so secure as the one to which we belong in this country. We are still extraordinarily remote from real life in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury. The tensions of which we are conscious are rather inherited tensions from a past age which continue to produce internecine strife rather than a challenging impact upon secular society. We are still so sufficiently secure from the storms that are blowing or, as our Lutheran brethren would say, from the daemonic forces which are loose in the world, that we can get thoroughly worked up about the necessity of protecting the Lord's Table from some poor sinner who might venture to come, rashly believing that Christ still receiveth sinners and eateth with them. Adolph Keller's words in his book *Church and State on the European Continent* about the nation of Great Britain might apply equally to its Church.

'Nothing strikes a Continental more when he comes to Great Britain than the unshaken security in which this great nation can still live, move and think. Whatever happens (and he gives a long list of happenings which might well be alarming), yet,' he adds, 'the economic and social security of the nation does not seem to be at stake.'

But Adolph Keller, if I read him aright, is not so impressed by this prevailing sense of security as to identify it with any particularly high form of religion. He does not say 'Woe unto those in such an age that are at ease in Zion,' but he does go on to speak of the insecurity on the continent, with all the ghastly fear which it arouses, in a very significant way.

'Only a few are privileged to know that this very insecurity is a truly religious situation, that man is never nearer to God than when he has lost everything on earth in which he had put his confidence.'

We shall not therefore rate too highly the fact that we in England are for the moment *au dessus de la mêlée*, or assume that it is necessarily by the good hand of our God that we are neither revolutionary in ourselves nor the cause of revolution in others.

It may even be unwise to assume that our internal security or our reasonable equipoise between Church and State will continue indefinitely. The political trials and spiritual opportunities of insecurity may be much nearer in this country than we imagine. The distinction between democratic and totalitarian states is nothing like so clear-cut as apologists often assume. Democratic countries carry within themselves not only the seeds of their own decay but the potential germs of dictatorship and totalitarianism. Lord Allen of Hurtwood drew attention in the *Times* last month to the fact that the National Government was in danger of making it a plank in its programme that the Government ought not to be opposed—not that the nature and character of the opposition to it was unsound, but that the fact of any opposition to a National Government was to be deplored. Along such subtle lines of reasoning we might easily arrive at ‘the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire.’ Let the situation seem to demand it; let a crisis arise spontaneously or after due preparation, and the metamorphosis of a National Government might very easily astonish many of its present supporters. The easy tension, which at present characterizes the relations of Church and State, Christianity and secular civilization, would become acute and we should soon have our own parallels to the ordeals of Christians on the Continent. War, for example, would inevitably bring such developments, and the preparation for war involves automatically the preparations for a Totalitarian State.

There remains therefore the possibility to be reckoned with that the distinction between political affairs in this country and on the Continent may be obliterated and that the more orderly development which prevails here between the relations of Church and State may be violently interrupted.

Meantime affairs are handled on both sides with tact and sympathy, with the minimum of idealism and the maximum of practical efficiency. The situation is greatly eased by the considerable amount of diffused Christianity which is resident in the

State and the far from negligible quantity of secularism which is to be found in the Church. They both get on together with so little irritation that conscientious people are genuinely disturbed. It is all a little bit too good to be true. The skilful leadership, which effects for the Church strategic retreats without losses, which prevents any clash on major political or economic issues and which acts as a reliable stabilizing influence may command our admiration but does not call forth much moral enthusiasm.

The danger is that we may be taken unaware when such a policy is no longer possible and when some naked issue demands a different kind of leadership. The steady infiltration of a policy of adjustment and compromise saps the heroic element in Church life, and if the necessity of taking sides should arise we shall hardly find ourselves in training. Our foolish confidence in the easy-going ways of our democratic institutions combined with our Fabian policy of delay may betray us. The inner citadel may be surrendered before we are aware that the enemy is even at the gates.

The romance of the situation abroad, like most other romances, consists for us in the fact that the situation is so utterly different to our own. When we can get no thrill out of our Church life where the rough edges of its contacts with the economic and political life of the nation are continually being smoothed by diplomacy, we get an immense thrill from seeing the issues joined elsewhere. Something tells us that these other Churches are more in touch with reality than our own. We dramatize their sufferings and we share vicariously in their witness and experience. This is the very essence of the romantic attitude towards life to which I allowed myself to give full expression in the opening sentences of this paper.

But romanticism has its dangers, and, looked at honestly, the use of the word is hardly seemly or fitting in relation to the gravity and perplexities of the situation which our brethren have to face. There is a great deal more than romance about imprisonment, or confiscation, or dismissal, or exile such as falls to the lot of the Confessional Christians in Germany or elsewhere. These men, if they ever stop to think about it, may rightly glory in their sufferings as filling up and completing the sufferings of Christ. Nor can we resist the longing to make a song or a saga of their

doings as part of the romance of the Gospel. But we owe it to these brave people to try to understand the why and the wherefore of their protest and to assess its spiritual and social value in relation to the environment in which it is made.

And here, I think, we must begin by trying to be fair to the State as well as to the Church. It is not a really satisfying diagnosis of the present conflict to say that daemonic powers are at work in the State and to condemn it as wholly evil. Much as we may regret many features of either the Fascist or Communist type of social organization they are both the outcome of disillusionment and fear. Self-preservation has driven people along new paths. The dictatorship of the privileged classes of Church and State in Russia and the sham political democracy in Italy and Germany were bound to become unworkable. The inequalities and injustices of the Versailles Treaty worked like madness within the body politic. The general revival of fear and insecurity drove nations to sacrifice liberties for the sake of strength. Power in one form or another became the god under whose wings they sought to rest.

During all this time of mental and psychical revolution the Church as the Church had very little to give. In this country we can hardly realize the aloofness of ordinary Church life on the Continent from the ordinary material needs and problems of the people. The Church in Russia was recognized as an organ of an oppressive government. The Church of Rome with its general conception of itself as a super-state was concerned largely with the maintenance of its own claims and position. The Evangelical Churches with their tendency to deny rather than to affirm the world treated the State at worst as a necessary evil or at best as a barrier against chaos erected by the inscrutable providence of God. With its constitution or its evolutionary development or even its ethical character they were hardly concerned.

Consequently the State was left to stumble along its dangerous and desperate path with little help or sympathy or guidance from the Church. In each country the Church was recognized as antagonistic or indifferent or self-interested. There was no tradition of social consciousness in the Church which could make it keep pace with a world in social revolution. Church and State drifted rapidly apart. The final settlement took different

forms in different countries according to the different degrees of tension between the two and according to the sagacity and statesmanship of the new rulers. Thus in Russia the Church was exiled or suppressed. In Italy the Church was re-established as a political ally of the new régime. In Germany the result is as yet uncertain.

The case which the State can put up to the Church or against the Church as the case may be is a very specious—even a very formidable one. With nineteen hundred years of Christianity and many hundreds of years of unfettered opportunity it is still only by power politics that we can hope to live. Only by economic nationalism in these days of general distrust and insecurity can we hope to feed our people. Only by a ruthless suppression of individual egotism can we be sufficiently unified to act swiftly in a world where the striking of the first blow may mean the difference between destruction and survival. The Church, so far as we can see, has made no vital contribution to the solution of these problems. From a national point of view, unless it is identified with the State, it is a divisive force. Its claim to educate the young is quite intolerable if the nation is to be master in its own house. It is out of touch with the heroic qualities of life which we have rediscovered for ourselves in the hour of our utmost need. Possibly a place may be found for it as enlightened Americans found room for the Indian in special reservations, but as regards its claims to independent authority or freedom to teach what is not authorized by the State there can be only one answer, and that is—an emphatic and totalitarian No!

I am afraid this attitude of the State must be regarded as a nemesis on the Church which on the one hand has never really separated itself from power politics nor on the other hand has ever set itself constructively to judge any particular economic order. It does not seem to have realized the tremendous social import of its own message about human personality or the demands of human fellowship. It was content with the general toleration given to it to preach and the general understanding that its ethics were relatively inapplicable to public affairs. Its interpretation of its own gospel of Redemption in relation to collective sin was so uncertain or so superficial as to be negligible. If it ever had been a force it certainly was no longer a

force bent on world redemption.

Consequently when things became desperate from an economic or political point of view there were no Christian revolutionaries available with any conception of what a Christian revolution might be. The traditional policy of the Church for many centuries to accept rather than to originate would have prevented any such development.

Nor perhaps could it very easily have been anticipated that in the new and realistic world which was being born some such working arrangements as survived even the French Revolution could not speedily have been effected. The Church which had always been content with a very modest place in the real politik of the nation and had shown its adaptability for working in reasonable harmony with so many types of government was not prepared for such rough treatment in a totalitarian world. It is as if a preacher who had never taken his preaching very seriously should suddenly find other people taking him very seriously indeed and throwing him into prison on the ground that he meant what he said. This is what has happened to the Church in a world where compromise has gone out of fashion.

It is to the eternal credit of the Church, especially in Germany, that so many are reacting to the persecution of the Church by discovering anew their own sense of seriousness and by broadening rather than lessening the area of their convictions open to attack. Just as European observers are puzzled by the working of the conscience of the Church of England in relation to the Establishment and the State, so we may be puzzled by the nature of the protest which is being made at the moment by the Confessional pastors in Germany. The freedom of the Word of God means so much, the freedom of the people means so little. The protest against racial inequality within the Church is so clear, the acceptance of submission to the principles of the Nazi State is so confusing. It is quite possible that realists like Herr Hitler, unfamiliar with Lutheran theology and already assured, as they imagined, of the support or acquiescence of the Evangelical Church, are genuinely surprised and embarrassed by the opposition which they are encountering. They may regard it as something abnormal or even eccentric, and are probably making the mistake of misjudging its fundamental character. We on the

other hand, who abhor the idea that other people's consciences should accept the compromises so satisfactory to our own, are wondering why the opposition did not begin earlier and take other ethical forms as well. It is no surprise to us that the area of controversy should be gradually enlarging, nor is it, I should imagine, surprising to the Evangelical pastors themselves who know the history and cherish the spirit of Martin Luther.

The really important thing, the thing that thrills us with hope for the whole Church, is that the protest should have begun somewhere, that it is of a spiritual character and cannot be equated with economic or institutional interests. Sometimes the protests of the Church have been so closely bound up with the rights of property and with other economic interests that they have lost much of their ethical value. But here any tendency to formulate a protest in such terms is prevented by the transcendent Barthian theology which inspires so many of its leaders. We may not all see eye to eye with the theology of Barth and Brunner and we may smile sympathetically at the strange fatality that should make their followers the heroes of a concrete situation, but when we reflect upon it could we think of any body of men equipped at least so theoretically and spiritually for a struggle with a totalitarian state?

For it is only on the highest ground that opposition to such a state can be maintained by the Christian Church. If the Church were a philanthropic institution, or a cultural club or an ethical society, it would lack the authority or the confidence necessary to resist the general process of absorption. It is because it is created by a Word of God, is entrusted with a redeeming gospel and is pledged to universal fellowship that it can confront the State, where needed, in the name of an authority greater than Caesar. Even the final argument of the State which is used to justify the suppression of human liberties—the need of self-preservation is powerless so far as the Church is concerned, for with the doctrine of the Cross at the very centre of its life the Church is bound to reply, 'He that saveth his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life shall save it.'

However late, therefore, in the day the protest has begun, we welcome it because of the hope that it implies for the resurgence of transcendent faith within the Church—not only for the

sake of the heroism and the romance of which the Church stands perpetually in need to justify its existence in its own eyes and in the eyes of others, but for far more than that. We welcome this protest because it is made in the name of the living God revealed in Christ. There is no other God that counts, for the god discovered in the 'depths of the German soul' of which we hear so much, or personified in the ancient Nordic myths or revealed in racial destiny, is a god of the twilight rather than the dawn. He cannot be taken in the long run as a serious competitor with the God of Christian philosophy, though the fantastic clothing of these speculations with the attributes of divinity indicates how even a Totalitarian State can hanker after a supernatural basis. The real conflict is between the God revealed in Christ and the unregenerate human heart which dreams that it can achieve totality within its own sphere in the sense that God is absolute in His: the protest of the German Church which directs itself to this point, however limited its social objective as yet may be, represents the very spearhead of the Christian Church. If it can succeed, Totalitarianism will have lost its meaning or so changed its meaning that the Church will be able to continue its work within the system with no more than reasonable tension. If it fails, as well it might through lack of prevision, of preparation and the lack of previous development of a social consciousness within its own members, then the torch of witness must pass on to other hands and the struggle be renewed elsewhere.

It is to this point that I would direct your attention, for I sometimes fear lest we may rest satisfied with expressing our indignation at the rigours of the Continental States and expressing our sympathy with the sufferings of our brethren in their ordeal. There is a danger lest the expository lesson of the situation should be missed and that consequently, if into our hands the torch of witness should suddenly be thrust, we should be found unready or unworthy. It is for this reason that we can feel that the long and tedious efforts to bring together representatives of the Churches from all over the world to the Life and Work Conference has been worth while and that the vast amount of preparation was justified. Those who have studied the literature and the reports on the relation of the Church to the economic order, the State and the community, cannot be too grateful to those

who have resolved that at whatever cost the expository lessons of the continental situation shall not be lost upon us. It would be quite unreasonable to dismiss the conference as useless or ineffective because no clear-cut economic or political policy for the Church may be recommended by it. It is sufficient that the Church has been equipped with all the material necessary for making its judgments in view of the grave situation already existing and the impending challenge which may come to all of us.

There is one group of clear-thinking people who believe that only by a revolutionary movement to the left will the Church avoid being made the willing or unwilling ally of economic capitalism in the general disintegration that is coming. They point to the immense vested interests which the Church has in the present economic order and to its historical associations with the ruling and possessing classes. It is not so clear how the Church, having moved to the left, which at least is far more Christian than moving to the right, is to avoid being made the tool of another kind of totalitarianism which, though economically less destructive of Christian values, may be equally injurious to ethical and spiritual liberties. Probably the warning so often repeated at Oxford against the danger of believing in Utopias is justified, and while it would be wholly damnable to make this caution an excuse for inertia, it is not unreasonable to bear in mind that no social order will abolish the tension between the divine will and the unregenerate human heart. Sin remains a disturbing factor throwing all social theories out of gear. It will remain so till the end of time.

There is a very significant passage in Dr. Visser Hooft's and Dr. Oldham's book, *The Church and its Function in Society*, which indicates how the Church may at least begin to get into training for the inevitable conflicts which await it. After pointing out with complete impartiality that

'the exaltation of the material above the spiritual in the activities of capitalistic society, the claim of the national State to be the ultimate authority in matters of faith and conduct, and the exercise of absolute power by dictatorships are in complete opposition to the claims of Christian discipleship,'

the writers go on to suggest the necessity of denouncing com-

promises with these anti-Christian forces as 'heresies which cannot be tolerated.'

The use of the word 'heresies' suggests a parallel which they are quick to follow up.

'Just as in the early centuries the creeds of the Church took their shape largely through the repudiation of particular heresies as incompatible with the Christian faith, so in our time the path towards a clearer perception of the obligations of Christians in society may be through the rejection of certain types of social conduct, social practice, or social organization as intolerable for the Christian conscience.'

There is something delightfully naïve and simple about the use of the word 'heresy.' It almost amounts to a stroke of genius to make use of it in this connection. To have discovered a parallel which may disarm the suspicions of good Church people while their feet are being led into the way of social revolution is a great achievement! How much more respectable it sounds to denounce capitalism as a Churchman than to attack it as a Marxian. How much more easy to close the ranks of Churchmen in fighting a heresy than in fighting the owners of the means of production. There is an old-world mediaeval sound about the word heresy which makes it irresistibly compelling to all the right people in its new modern setting. Which of the authors is responsible for it I do not know, and I am afraid we must not attempt to apply the methods of J. and P. to the document, otherwise I should be inclined to imagine that a certain type of Lutheranism was here manifesting its cloven 'hoof.'

But the suggestion that progress is to be made by a process of elimination or repudiation is extraordinarily helpful and carries us some way on our road. If it is true that one of the main contributory causes to the arrival on the scene of a totalitarian state is the economic and social disorder within it, it is evident that a bold policy at least of repudiation is the only alternative to a steady drifting to disaster. Even if in the end such radical change as merits the name of revolution is essential, the transition will be greatly eased, and the shedding of blood may be avoided, if meantime the Christian witness has been sufficiently effective. It is precisely here that the expository lessons of the European situation should be applied, lest like others before us we should continue eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the flood comes and carries us all away.

No one can doubt that even if there is no specific Christian programme which the Church could adopt, or what is much more indisputably true, on which the Church could agree, there are heresies or abuses, sins or social injustices — call it what you will — which the Church should proceed to repudiate at once. Fellowship, as we know, within the State is grossly hindered by the uneven distribution of wealth within it which bears no relation to any principle of justice. Exploitation in every form, open or covert, vulgar or refined, is part of the system under which we live. Inequality of opportunity, as regards education, leisure, health and environment, is so taken for granted by the ordinary well-to-do Christians that many of them are found to be in violent opposition to the smallest efforts to iron things out on a more obviously Christian basis. The irresponsibility of Capital in relation to the needs of the community as a whole is a byword in democratic countries, and yet many Christian people will take the risk of the coming of the Totalitarian State, with its far stricter control of capital and its far severer ordeals for the Christian faith, rather than stir hand or foot to bring the making or spending of capital into line with any system of Christian ethics.

Within the institutional life of the Church itself there is an even more culpable neglect in the failure to repudiate the ordinary standards of economic capitalism. The clergy live side by side in poverty or wealth as haphazard circumstances and the dead hand of a past age may decide. Alone of almost all His Majesty's subjects they enjoy complete security of tenure. No one can disturb them in their wealth or poverty, and the laity are for the most part wholly indifferent as to whether, as happens in a few cases, the parson is paid too much or, as happens in a larger number of cases, he is paid too little in relation to the house he is forced to live in and the standard of living expected of him. There is nothing to differentiate the attitude of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners or Queen Anne's Bounty or any other property holding Corporation of the Church of England from any other reasonably enlightened capital-holding societies under the present system. Nor does the Church make any corporate attempt to use its financial resources to protect its own members who may suffer for conscience sake. The Churchman

amply provided with private means can enjoy the luxury of a good conscience without the slightest inconvenience; another, compelled to give up his work for conscience sake, has nothing at all, not even insurance money, with any certainty to depend upon. The Church preaches equally to both (equally to both—mark the inhuman correctness of its procedure!) that they should follow their conscience, but the rich make no corporate effort to help the poor in this matter. And then we wonder when a totalitarian state arises and abolishes the rights of conscience within the Christian community which the Christian community would not pay a single penny to preserve! Truly we are often a scandal, *i.e.* a stumbling block to the pagan moralist.

There is no lack of material to begin on, no shortage of jumping-off places if we are willing to inaugurate even this milder policy of repudiation of the grosser forms of social evil. What is usually shirked, and I am not sure that it was not shirked at Oxford as elsewhere, is this. There is always an economic price to be paid for the privilege of following Christ. It may take the mild form of sitting loosely to one's possessions and being prepared to lose part of them for the sake of some better system of the distribution of wealth. It may take the humdrum form of paying increased rates for the sake of improved social services. It may take the hazardous form of financial support of a revolutionary party. It may mean pooling resources for the protection of the individual rights of conscience within the Christian community. It may mean breaking with the traditional way in which the Church money from time immemorial has been subject to the ordinary laws of interest and investment. But in some way or other our witness is going to cost us something. Until the doctrine of the Cross, which theologians rightly tell us is central to the Christian faith, has been applied to all our thinking and acting—so far as our worldly possessions are concerned, we shall never be able to meet either the Marxist or the Fascist on equal terms.

As we look out upon the sullen and angry world from the comparative internal peace and security of these islands, we must feel if we have any faith in a living God that the Church in this country is called upon to take its life in its hands to serve the larger purposes of the Kingdom of God. It has a unique

opportunity. It could detach itself with more statesmanship and more goodwill from what is effete and unchristian in the present order than any European Church working in a milieu of resentment and exasperation. It is action that is needed. Some day the age in which we live will be described, perhaps scornfully, as the age of conferences, the age in which the Church never ceased talking but never did anything. The thrill that comes to us from across the seas is, as I have pointed out, the thrill caused by a Church in process of being silenced in word proceeding to take refuge in action. If the example of the Confessional Christians in Germany can inspire us to take such action as will vindicate the Christian character of our Church, totalitarianism will be defeated before the battle is begun. No state in modern times has yet been confronted by a Church which is boldly Christian—which repudiates the distinction between great powers and small, which is prepared to sacrifice its own material interests for the sake of the common good, and which recognizes the doctrine of the Cross in relation both to politics and economics. Such a Church cannot be created in a moment; and recognizing the doctrine of relativity no doubt it may be urged it never can be. Sin wrecks the witness and work of the Church as it wrecks the programme and achievement of the State. But we can resolutely keep the vision before us, recognizing that God always intends us to shape the witness of the Church on these lines, and we can make our challenge far bolder than we think we can. Even a Church as yet imperfect which has escaped from words into the realm of action, is a spiritual force to be reckoned with. First of all come the pioneer groups starting the state by unexpected assertions of the Christian conscience. Later the collective action of larger bodies and finally the conscience of Christian people so strong that the State must allow for it and modify its policy accordingly. It is well within the bounds of human possibility—I need not say it is within the compass of God's will—if we can avoid the paralysing totalitarian effects of war, to achieve something infinitely more Christian than we have to-day. It is no longer words but courage that is needed, and the capacity to work and to suffer for a cause!

CHRISTIANITY AND THE NEW MORALITY

By ST. JOHN ERVINE, LL.D., Member of the Irish Academy,
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WHEN I was invited to read this paper, my first intention was to give the subject a wider application than it usually receives. The New Morality is popularly associated with sex relationships, but I wished to consider it in connexion with the whole social system. I was particularly anxious to discuss a question which is steadily becoming more serious, namely, the relationship of the individual to the State. How much longer can we tolerate the doctrine that the community may commit with impunity acts which, if they were performed by individuals, would immediately and rightly result in their imprisonment? Are there to be many mansions in our Father's house, or are the mansions all to be of one size and shape? 'The sense of solidarity,' says Dr. Coulton in the Introduction to the first volume of his great work, *Five Centuries of Religion*, 'is apt to deaden the sense of personal responsibility: a man will do for The Cause what he will not dream of doing for personal profit'; and there is a school of political theorists who deride the doctrine that the State should be no less scrupulous—should, indeed, be more scrupulous—than its individual citizens, and that it should display common honesty even if it cannot display honesty which is uncommon.

Then there is the question of war. I shall not, I hope, be charged with a desire to keep men at war if I say that I cannot agree with those who say it is a Christian's duty to refuse to fight in any circumstances whatsoever. Our Lord frequently used violence in speech and behaviour, nor did He stop to consider the devils whom He drove out of the possessed. They were driven out in spite of their plea that possession is nine points of the law, nor were they compensated for their abrupt extrusion. To let evil obtain victories without opposition is surely to commit evil by assisting it. I have no quarrel with the man who says

it is hard to decide which is a just war and which is not, but I have a quarrel with him when he says it is impossible, and my quarrel becomes fierce when he adds that even wars which are unquestionably just must not be fought. If that be right, why do we not instantly surrender to the fiend? It is absurd to say that all wars have been baleful in their effect. So stout a pacifist as Mr. Bertrand Russell remarks, in *Which Way to Peace?* that 'there have been wars that have been good,' and he cites, as examples of them, Caesar's Conquest of Gaul and the American War of Independence. Dr. Edwyn Bevan, who is no fire-eater, informed the readers of *The Times*¹ that 'force (combined with sagacity) decided that Rome, and not Carthage, should be the ruling power in the Mediterranean; force, in the days of Joan of Arc, decided that the kings of England should no longer rule large bits of France; force decided in 1866 that Prussia rather than Austria should dominate Germany.' Mr. Russell not only admits that wars have sometimes done good, but insists that the doctrine of non-resistance may result in the extinction of good and the triumph of evil. Referring to the wars of religion which were waged in Europe 'for a hundred and thirty years, from Luther to the Peace of Westphalia in 1648,' he says:

'Persecution was so successful that in most European countries the dominant religion at the present day is that which was held by the Government in the early seventeenth century. Nor can it be said that either party could have succeeded as well if it, but not the other party, had practised non-resistance. If the German Protestants had not taken up arms, there would soon have been no Protestants in Germany; and if the German Catholics had avoided war, there would have been no Catholics. As it was, they fought until Germany was devastated and neither side gained anything; but if one side, and not the other, had been willing to fight, the peaceable side would have lost everything.'²

A fact which the British people have yet to realise is that although they, having done very well with the annexation of other people's territories, are prepared to stabilize the world on present conditions, nations which either have no territories beyond their own borders or once had them but have them no longer, are not at all willing to do so. Mussolini will, no doubt, be ready to seek peace and to ensue it when, but not before, he has re-established the Roman Empire on the Mediterranean. It

¹ In a letter published on October 4, 1935.

² *Which Way to Peace?* By Bertrand Russell. Pp. 111-2.

will be remembered that Moses, having slaughtered his way from Egypt to Canaan, announced that there must be no more killing. In some such mood, Tolstoy, after his wife had had thirteen children and three miscarriages, asserted that the chief virtue was chastity.

It was when I had reached this point in the provisional arrangements for my paper that I realized that I could only read it to you if the other lecturers were informed that they need not come to the Conference, because I was going to read all the papers myself. I therefore abandoned my grandiose scheme and decided to confine my paper chiefly to one aspect of the New Morality, namely, sex relationships.

I will begin by recognizing that all these Moralists, Old and New, have one common ambition, to see the human race improved; and, since the New Moralists repudiate Christianity, I will consider their proposals mainly from a biological point of view. Primitive people sought to preserve their stock from deterioration by insisting that their marriages should be exogamous. There was a Purity Commission in Spain, under the Inquisition, by which a man's blood was tested to discover whether he had a Moslem or a Jew among his ancestors; and Cervantes himself was once hauled before it by his enemies who, but for a lucky accident, would almost certainly have found a taint in his blood. The class system, so far as it applies to marriage, is an attempt to produce better people by restricting the range of choice in mates to those who belong to the same social grade, and the horror which a duchess would feel if she were sought in marriage by a dustman is a crude expression of biological belief. It is only now, and still only to a limited extent, that royal persons are allowed to marry commoners. We are beginning to realize that the restriction of choice in marriage adversely affects the health of the species, but it will be a long time before a peer will think it nothing out of the way to marry a peasant, even though the fairy tales of the world have warned him of the danger of degeneracy by holding up to general admiration the princess who married a swineherd.

The hope of a better and more reasonable race than now inhabits the earth sustains us in times such as these, when mankind appears to be losing its wits and to be making straight for the lunatic asylum. If it be true, as Mr. H. G. Wells and his collab-

orators, Mr. G. P. Wells and Professor Julian Huxley, assure us in *The Science of Life*, that 'the inventions and organizations that have produced the peculiar opportunities and dangers of the modern world have been the work so far of a few hundred thousand exceptionally clever and enterprising people,' and that 'the rest of mankind has just been carried along by them, and has remained practically what it was a thousand years ago,' we may wonder whether a time will not come when the small band of 'exceptionally clever and enterprising people' will begin to be tired of maintaining vast hordes of dull, inert and useless men and women who oppose every attempt to make their lives ampler and finer.

It is when we consider the possibility of improving the quality of the race that we find ourselves, as Christian men and women, in profound disagreement with the New Moralists. We do not know what we mean by a pure race, nor do we even know that a pure race would be desirable if we could obtain it. Dr. Julian Huxley and Dr. A. C. Haddon, in their book *We Europeans*, remind us that the theory of a pure race is largely a superstition which is exploited in modern Germany as tyrannously as it was exploited in sixteenth century Spain. If we go back only twelve generations, each of us, after we have made allowance for intermarriage of relatives, has hundreds, even thousands of forebears, and may have in our veins a great variety of blood. The argument can, of course, be overworked. If we carry our arithmetical progression beyond reason, we shall arrive at a point at which a man will have more ancestors than there were ever inhabitants of the world. There has probably been far more extensive in-breeding than any of us suppose. Socrates, you probably remember, made Dr. Huxley and Dr. Haddon's point in the *Theætetus*, and the same thought is expressed by Walter de la Mare in a lovely verse :

Very old are the woods,
And the buds that break
Out of the briar's boughs
When March winds wake
So old with their beauty are—
Oh no man knows
Through what wild centuries
Roves back the rose.

Certain facts must first be considered. We cannot ignore the

difference in the economic relationship of the sexes to-day in comparison with that relationship between them in previous generations. The reader of Jane Austen's novels feels that centuries separate him from the people who live in her works, yet she died no longer ago than 1817, two years before the birth of Queen Victoria. Marriage is still the chief occupation open to women, and we may suppose that it will continue to be their chief occupation, if not for ever, at all events for a long time to come; but it is not now almost the only occupation women may follow nor the one to which all of them aspire, nor do young ladies now consult their mammas morning, noon and night on the number of eligible gentlemen in their neighbourhood. Such scenes as are common in *Pride and Prejudice*, in which the daughters of the household are distraught lest a young man should elude them, and a mother is in tears because her husband will not steal a march on other fathers by getting his call on a wealthy young bachelor in first, are inconceivable to-day, though match-making mothers are not yet extinct.

The revolution in the economic relationship of men and women has brought into existence a problem with which the Christian Churches have not yet attempted to deal, of which, indeed, they scarcely seem aware: the problem, that is to say, of the able woman of affairs or business who does not wish to give up her work to marry, and yet wishes to enjoy, if that is the word to use, sexual experience, and even to bear children. For convenience sake, I will call this the problem of the thousand-a-year woman. It is not easy for her to marry, even if she wishes to marry; for her ability and her position remove her from the ranks of those to whom men who still have their way to make dare aspire. A man of her own position is probably married already. What, then, is she to do? It is harder to answer that question than it is to state the facts of the situation as they are. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that many successful unmarried business women are enjoying extra-marital rights. In plainer words, they are living in some sort of relationship, sporadic rather than permanent, with a middle-aged married man of ability not less than their own. I will not discuss the morality of this, but will content myself with saying that the arrangement is biologically bad, since it deprives the State of

the children of women who, more than many women, ought to be mothers. We are not so rich in able people that we can afford to let any capable and intelligent woman go barren to her grave. So far are we from realizing how we are wasting potentially fine mothers that our local authorities cannot be restrained from dismissing a woman teacher from her employment when she marries.

It is evident that the problem I have outlined is likely to become more pressing in the future, and unless we can solve it, we may suffer from a disaster no less than that suffered by such a country as Ireland, where the major part of the educated and intelligent population enters the priesthood or the convents of the Church of Rome and is, in effect, sterilized. No one who knows the history of our nation can be unaware of the number of distinguished men and women who have been born in manse and rectories, nor can anyone who has only a superficial knowledge of Ireland fail to realize how infinite is the loss that distracted country has sustained from womanless and childless presbyteries.

We must bear in mind another fact, namely, that the age of marriage tends more and more to be deferred in those classes where it ought to be put forward, nor is this tendency reduced where the woman is earning her living and intends to continue doing so after her marriage. The skilled workman marries later than the unskilled, and has fewer children. In all ranks superior to those of the working-class, except, perhaps, among the well-to-do, marriage is, comparatively speaking, late and families are small. Families of one or two children are common and becoming commoner. In some great business organizations, such as banks, clerks are forbidden to marry until they are in receipt of a salary of £200 a year, a salary which an official in the provinces may not reach until after he is thirty years of age. I have even heard of a bishop who forbids the curates in his diocese to marry before they are in receipt of a certain salary. This causes a postponement of paternity which is unfortunate, if, as Bayer, a leading German neurologist, asserts, the best age for marriage, in temperate zones, is twenty-five for the man and twenty-one for the woman.

The third fact to be remembered is one that is, we may hope, characteristic only of our own time and will not be repeated in

the history of mankind : the effect of the late war on thousands of women, between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five, who, but for it, would almost certainly now be wives and mothers. It is absurd to suppose that these women feel none of the sexual urges that are common to healthy people, or that they are content to let them remain unsatisfied. It is still more absurd to suppose that the community has not been gravely injured by the loss of their children.

There are other facts, such as the rise in the standard of living, which might be considered in connexion with this matter, but I think I have mentioned enough to show the gravity of the problem we have to solve. It is a little hard on the Reformed Churches that just as they have caught up with Dr. Marie Stopes they should find themselves confronted with Dr. Enid Charles, who warns them that if the population continues to decline at its present rate, the people of Great Britain will number less than forty millions in 1965, and may rush down to four millions a century hence. Neither Professor Carr-Saunders, who quotes Dr. Charles's estimates, nor any other statistician or populationist who has expressed alarm on the subject, has told us *why* a large population is better than a small one, and they leave their readers and listeners with the feeling that large masses of people are desired only for the purposes of war. London has a larger population to-day than the whole of England had in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but who will say that our people are more intelligent, more adventurous or more skilful in defending themselves than the Elizabethans? The population of Athens, in the time of Pericles, was not so large as that of Portsmouth to-day, but Portsmouth has still to give the world what Athens gave it.

Whether we feel alarm or pleasure at the declining population, we can scarcely feel pleased about the postponement of marriage in a vast number of cases or its abolition in others. The Christian Church is not irrevocably committed to one form of marriage. Polygamy has, in fact, been defended by the Roman Communion, as well as by Martin Luther, who thought bigamy preferable to divorce, and John Milton, on the ground that it was practised under the Old Testament Dispensation and that this Dispensation is part of the Christian heritage. Circumstances, such as the grave reduction of a people by earthquake,

epidemic disease, famine, flood or war, might cause the Churches to consent to polygamy, at all events until the population had been restored to its proper proportions. But, apart from calamity, monogamy and the institution of the family seem likely to prevail among Christians, and it is significant that the Turks, under the rule of Ataturk, have made polygamy illegal throughout the Ottoman republic. Even if the school of anthropologists who proclaimed their belief that primitive man was polygamous and that modern man would do well to follow his example, had been right, we might justifiably have replied to them that the theory of evolution gives us cause to suppose that monogamous marriage is as much an improvement on the promiscuity which it has superseded as man is on the anthropoid ape. But it appears that this school, which has left survivors chiefly in the United States, was not right; that it was, on the contrary, hopelessly wrong. Westermarck derides the idea that promiscuity was the general custom in early communities :

‘The numerous facts put forward in support of the hypothesis do not entitle us to assume that promiscuity has ever been the prevailing form of sexual relations among a single people, far less that it has constituted a general stage in the social development of man, and least of all that such a stage formed the starting point of all human history.’³

Later in the same volume he says :

‘It is not, of course, impossible that among some people the intercourse between the sexes may have been almost promiscuous. But the hypothesis according to which promiscuity has formed a general stage in the social history of mankind, instead of belonging . . . to the class of hypotheses which are scientifically permissible, is, in my opinion, one of the most unscientific ever set forth within the whole domain of sociological speculation.’⁴

The New Morality covers a multitude of reformers, some of whom must feel considerable surprise at the company they have to keep. It is associated in this country chiefly with the name of the distinguished mathematical philosopher, Mr. Bertrand Russell, who, however, might complain that the leadership is none of his seeking. His book, *Marriage and Morals*, is the work most widely known in this connexion, but another book, *The Scientific Outlook*, should also be consulted. Mr. Russell has lent the authority of his name to some very dubious volumes, American in origin, in which a change, not only in regard to

³ *History of Human Marriage*, Vol. I, pp. 297-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

sexual relations, but in the entire social system is advocated. He can scarcely have read the contributions to a portentous volume, entitled *The New Generation*,⁵ which he introduces to the British public; for if he had, he must surely have hesitated to put his name to as slovenly a work as has ever been issued from any publishing house in the world. It is with pride that I record the fact that the only sensible essays in this book are contributed by Europeans, who include Professor Malinowski and Mr. Havelock Ellis, neither of whom can be claimed as a supporter of the theories set out by his colleagues. The intellectual quality of one of the editors of the book, Mr. Calverton, may be realized when I say that in his own volume, *The Bankruptcy of Marriage* (pp. 164-5), he quotes and seems to endorse some statistics of prostitution in London, according to which it appears that there were 300,000 prostitutes in the metropolis in 1900. As the population of Greater London in 1901 was 6,581,402, divided into 3,107,831 males and 3,473,571 females, Mr. Calverton's estimate seems to be excessive, especially when one remembers that three out of every five of the total population probably consisted of children and aged persons. On that assumption, we may suppose that there were 1,400,000 women and 1,200,000 men between the ages of 20 and 50 in London in 1901. According to Mr. Calverton, then, two women out of every nine in Greater London in that year were prostitutes! There was one prostitute to every four men! . . . After that, it is difficult to give any credence to anything Mr. Calverton asserts.

But our impatience with his handling of facts and statistics must not deter us from examining his beliefs about the family and sex relationships which he and his colleagues assiduously profess and propagate in books and magazines; especially when these beliefs are recommended to the mob by men of such importance as Mr. Bertrand Russell.

The contributors to *The New Generation* are revolutionaries in the widest sense of that term. They do not wish to reform the marriage state: they wish to abolish it. They do not wish to make family life more tolerable: they wish to destroy it. They

⁵ *The New Generation*. A series of Essays by Thirty-two Authors. Edited by V. F. Calverton and Samuel D. Schmalhausen. With an Introduction by Bertrand Russell. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.

do not desire to see sexual relationships made more fastidious : they wish to remove the fastidious element from them and to make them entirely promiscuous. Maternity is to be made a specialized function, performed by women who may not even be aware of the identity of the male by whom they have been impregnated. Paternity, except as a purely physical function, casually and indifferently performed, will vanish : 'Fathers,' says Mr. Russell in a melancholy forecast of the future which he published in *The Scientific Outlook*, 'would, of course, have nothing to do with their children. There would in general be only one father to every five mothers, and it is quite likely that he would never have seen the mothers of his children. The sentiment of paternity would thus disappear completely.' Mr. Russell anticipates an age when children will not so much be brought up *on* the bottle as *in* the bottle, and he invites us to believe that conception will one day be brought about by a sort of chemical process. In a long passage from *The Scientific Outlook*, which I feel I must cite, Mr. Russell prophesies what the family will be like when science has finished with it, and allows us to feel that this is precisely what he hopes will happen to it :

'If the simultaneous regulation of quantity and quality is taken seriously in the future, we may expect that in each generation some 25 per cent. of women and some 5 per cent. of men will be selected to be the parents of the next generation, while the remainder of the population will be sterilized, which will in no way interfere with their sexual pleasure, but will merely render these pleasures destitute of social importance. The women who are selected for breeding will have to have eight or nine children each, but will not be expected to perform any other work, except the suckling of the children for a suitable number of months. No obstacles will be placed upon their relations with sterile men, or upon the relations of sterile men and women with each other, but reproduction will be regarded as a matter which concerns the State, and will not be left to the free choice of the persons concerned. Perhaps it will be found that artificial impregnation is more certain and less embarrassing, since it will obviate the need of any personal contact between the father and mother of the prospective child. Sentiments of personal affection may still be connected with intercourse not intended to be fruitful, while impregnation will be regarded in an entirely different manner, more in the light of a surgical operation, so that it will be thought not ladylike to have it performed in the natural manner. The qualities for which parents will be chosen will differ greatly according to the status which it is hoped the child will occupy. In the governing class a considerable degree of intelligence will be demanded of parents ; perfect health will, of course, be indispensable. So long as gestation is allowed to persist to its natural period, mothers will also have to be

selected by their capacity for easy delivery, and will therefore have to be free from an unduly narrow pelvis. It is probable, however, that as time goes on the period of gestation will be shortened, and the later months of foetal development will take place in an incubator. This would also free mothers from the need of suckling their children, and would thus make maternity a not very onerous matter. The care of infants intended to belong to the governing class would seldom be left to the mothers. Mothers would be selected by their eugenic qualities, and these would not necessarily be the qualities required in a nurse. On the other hand, the early months of pregnancy might be more burdensome than at present, since the foetus would be subjected to various kinds of scientific treatment intended to affect beneficially not only its own characteristics but those of its possible descendants.'

Mr. Russell is probably exercising his great gift of ironic comment in this passage, but we must not on that account suppose that proposals such as he describes are not being made seriously. They have, of course, often been made before—in Plato's *Laws*, for example, and we know that the Spartans attempted to regulate births in something like the manner he sets out. They bred exclusively for soldiers, exposing any infant which seemed to them unlikely to make a good warrior. The result of their policy was that they bred all the brains out of Sparta, which perished ignominiously.

The old idea that there is good stock, corresponding roughly to the upper classes, and bad stock, corresponding roughly to the lower classes, no longer has any authority behind it; nor, indeed, do all biologists believe that good stock is essential to the production of good stock. Professor H. S. Jennings, a distinguished American biologist, asserts in his book, *The Biological Basis of Human Nature*, that

'two parents may be seriously defective, perhaps in the same characteristic, and yet produce offspring that are all without the personal defects. In this way, two parents that are both lazy or stupid may produce offspring that are industrious and of lively intelligence; even two parents that are feeble-minded may produce normal children.'

It is all, apparently, a question of associating the right genes. The fact that a child is lazy or stupid or feeble-minded or otherwise defective is not, as we have hitherto supposed, due to bad parents, in the psychological sense, or because the child has had poor nutrition, nor to anything else except the fact that he has received a bad combination in one of his gene-pairs—two defective genes, one from each parent. It is common to find that defects which are found in both parents are not repeated in their

offspring. For example, in the fruit fly, individuals with small vestigial wings may be mated with others that have no wings; the offspring will have no wing defects, but all will have normally formed wings.

Prof. Jennings, attempting to discover how the race might possibly be improved by legislative process, concludes that

'there is only one way in which to get rid of defective genes so that they shall not reappear, and that way is simply that the individuals bearing the defective genes must not produce offspring. In no other way can the career of defective genes be stopped. This, then, is the fundamental method of racial eugenics.'

But on the same page he confesses that

'there is no direct way of identifying the carriers of defective genes. Some of them may be known through family histories, but in the great majority of cases neither the individual himself nor anyone else is aware that he is the carrier of a defective gene. Consequently it is not possible to stop their propagation, so that there is no direct means of removing from the race the defective genes borne by them. These hidden defective genes borne by normal individuals are much more numerous than the manifested ones borne by individuals who are themselves defective. In the case of feeble-mindedness it has been calculated that there are about thirty times as many normal individuals having defective genes as there are feeble-minded individuals.'

The time required to bring about the superior race which our extravagant sociologists desire is, according to Professor Jennings, incalculable. He says:

'It has been computed that if the proportion of feeble-minded in the population is one per 1,000, to decrease that proportion to one per 10,000 will require about sixty-eight generations, or two or three thousand years, if it is done merely by stopping the propagation of feeble-minded individuals.'

We must bear in mind that the suppression of parenthood in people whom we arbitrarily regard as unfit to be parents may be highly dangerous to the general welfare of the race. A factor does not disappear because it is not apparent: it may only be dormant. When yellow peas were crossed with green peas, the green characteristic disappeared in the next generation, but it reappeared in the second generation in the proportion of one green to three yellow. Dr. Butler, the Bishop of Lichfield, was a distinguished man; his son, the Rev. Samuel Butler, was a good deal of a fool; his grandson, Samuel Butler, was a genius. If the Rev. Samuel Butler had been prevented from propagating his species because he was a fool, we should never have had *The Way of all Flesh*. Is it not probable that human beings,

like fields, may lie fallow for a generation, and that this fallow condition is essential to the welfare of mankind?

The consideration of circumstances such as I have so summarily set out in these references to biological beliefs, must make us pause before we consent to become the subject of experiments such as our New Moralists propose. We may fairly request them to settle their account with the biologists before they open one with us. Mankind, in spite of its defects and its follies, has achieved greatness. A long time has elapsed since a discontented piece of protoplasm climbed out of its primeval slime and started the painful ascent towards Shakespeare and Mr. Bernard Shaw, Einstein, Newton and Marconi, but the feat has been accomplished, and we may hope that the will which drove it to these dazzling heights will keep it climbing until at last it finds its fulfilment in God Himself. Certain institutions have become established in the course of that long and sometimes exhausting pilgrimage, and these institutions, such as the family, have acquired in the minds of most men a sanctity which is justified by the facts of experience. The New Moralists are anxious to destroy the present organization of society, which has grown out of the need of mankind, and to replace it with an organization which has not grown, but has been manufactured; and finding that the family is the basis on which the whole of our civilization rests, they concentrate on it their most furious attacks. Invoking the help of the psycho-analysts, they horrify us with accounts of complexes, so that a man dare not dream of his grandmother lest he should be charged with indecency; and they assure us that family life is a long orgy of infamous relationships. In a cleaner world, we are told, it will be a wise child that knows its own father.

The Christian's first observation on the proposals of the New Moralists is that they abolish the individual's responsibility for himself and make him entirely the creature of those who are, however arbitrarily, set in authority over him. The Christian believes that he is finally responsible for his own redemption, having the power to choose whether he will go to heaven or to hell, but the New Moralists deny him this responsibility and insist that he shall go to a heaven which they have designed on dialectical and strictly hygienic lines. The prospect is bleak,

for the Christian knows that a man who is forced to go to heaven against his wish, will probably end by making it a hell. It is his duty, therefore, to oppose as fiercely as he can all those who would disrupt the family and commit the child to the care of any person but the man who begot it and the woman who gave it birth. His duty to make this resistance is enforced by the biologists, who tell him that these schemes cannot achieve the intention of those who propose them. We shall not even receive the stone they offer us for bread.

But it will not be enough merely to oppose the New Moralists. The Christian has a positive, as well as a negative, obligation to fulfil. He is seeking for the good life, on earth as well as in heaven, and he cannot, therefore, disregard any condition which adversely affects the attainment of it, here or hereafter. 'In civilization as in war,' says Dr. Coulton, 'there is a time to dig ourselves in, and a time to go over the top.' What is wrong with society is, not that it is Christian, but that it isn't, and we are beginning to feel an inflexible conviction that it will never be right until it is Christian. This belief involves us in the further belief that we are concerned with the whole of existence, temporal as well as eternal, and that if a single sparrow falls to the ground it is our duty to find out why it has fallen, to alleviate its distress and heal its wounds, and, if possible, to prevent it from falling again. It is not the duty, though it is sometimes the privilege, of a Christian to lay down laws, but it is his duty as well as his privilege to live a life from which laws may be deduced. 'By their fruits ye shall know them' does not mean that they shall fill the statute books with legislation, especially of a repressive character, but that they shall fill the earth with examples that are worthy of emulation.

Dean Inge, who has earned our gratitude for the courage with which he has expressed his opinions, especially when they were wrong, remarks somewhere that Jesus did not devise a political system, and he complains of priests who turn their pulpits into political party platforms. One may agree with the Dean—he will forgive us if we continue affectionately to refer to him by that title—that God is not a Conservative, nor is He a Communist, but we may suppose He is something of both, since Conservatives and Communists are His children, even

though they may deny their paternity. Jesus did not express a definite opinion on the subject of sweated labour or the rights of small nationalities, but it is inconceivable that He would have approved of a sweater or have held a high opinion of those who think that an Abyssinian may be smothered with poison gas because he has neglected to bring himself up to the level of Signor Mussolini. I am not, I hope, overlooking the force of Dean Inge's argument when I suggest that it is the duty of a Christian to see that neither he nor the State to which he belongs shall deprive any man of the opportunity to lead the good life : by which I mean the opportunity to develop to the fullness of his capacity the gifts of mind and body and soul that God has given him. And here, perhaps, I may quote Dr. Coulton again :

'Catholicism, to use that word in that widest sense in which it applies not only to the Roman but to a considerable party in the Anglican communion, has always shown more cohesion and a stronger social sense than its opponents and has thus gone far to redeem its intellectual shortcomings. When individualism has degenerated into selfishness, no amount of abstract truth will save it ; the world is not so much moved by logic as by *savoir faire* ; and the very wildest revivalist appeals more to humanity than the student whose speculations leave his own heart cold.'

Perhaps Dr. Coulton overestimates the social sense of those who attempt, unwarrantably, to restrict the name of Catholic to themselves, and perhaps he underestimates the social sense of those who are called Evangelicals : Wilberforce, for example, and Lord Shaftesbury had a higher social sense than Dr. Pusey. Cardinal Newman, who, after he had composed 'Lead, Kindly Light,' joined the Roman Catholic Church, thus proving that God does not always answer prayer, said these words in 1850 :

'The Church regards the world, and all that is in it, as a mere shadow, as dust and ashes, compared with the value of one single soul. She holds that unless she can, in her own way, do good to souls, it is no use her doing anything ; she holds that it were better for the sun and moon to drop from Heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions who are upon it to die of starvation in extremest agony, so far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost, but should commit one venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, though it harmed no one, or steal one poor farthing without excuse. She considers the action of this world and the action of the soul simply incommensurate, viewed in their respective spheres ; for she would rather save the soul of one wild bandit of Calabria, or whining beggar of Palermo, than draw a hundred miles of railroad through the length and breadth of Italy, or carry out a sanitary reform, in its fullest details, in every city of Sicily, except so far as these great national works tend to some spiritual good beyond them.'

The rhetoric is very resounding, and we need not disagree with the substance of it, though we may demur to the implication that the Church of Rome alone has the right to say what is and what is not spiritual good; but we can better believe that there is no reason why the soul of a wild bandit of Calabria or a whining beggar of Palermo should not be saved and, at the same time, a hundred miles of railway should be drawn through the length and breadth of Italy. We cannot, I suggest to this Conference, turn our eyes from the material conditions of our time and think only of our souls. Manning, more wise than Newman, remarked once to Cardinal Vaughan, who was despising the world in his presence, that God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son for it; He would not have given His Son for a worthless and despicable world. We shall, I fear, look uncommonly foolish if, when we come into the presence of the Almighty and He asks us what we did with His earth, we reply, 'As little as possible!'

The attack on the family may best be met by making family life possible for those who desire it, but to whom it is denied by economic conditions. The generality of women ardently desire to have a husband and a home and children, but the wave of materialism which is sweeping over the world makes the fulfilment of their desire more and more difficult. The mechanized civilization in which we live has had deplorable effects on the mind and spirit of the vast majority of people, who are ceasing to put their trust in God so that they may put it in machinery. But the good life will not come out of a factory: it will come out of a home; and it is the Christian's duty to fortify this home, to preserve it from violation, to make it, even more than it has hitherto been, the citadel in which loving fathers and mothers care for the young lives they have created. The sons of God, if they ever appear on earth, will not emerge from chemical retorts, each neatly endowed with the nature and ability which the community wishes him to possess, but will come, unique and incalculable, from a home in which a man and a woman, loving and respecting each other, have pooled their lives in an effort to bring out of them better lives than their own.

THE FLIGHT FROM REASON

By the Rev. J. C. HARDWICK, M.A., B.Sc.

WHEN Constantine had disposed of one of his imperial rivals—Maxentius—in battle, a triumphal arch was erected in Rome to commemorate the happy event. The monument still stands, says Gibbon, ‘a melancholy proof of the decline of the arts and a singular testimony of the meanest vanity.’ As it was not possible in the capital city of the Empire to find a sculptor who was capable of adorning the triumphal edifice, recourse was had to the arch of Trajan, erected more than two centuries earlier, which was stripped of its most elegant figures. The sculpture was thus provided ready-made—far better in quality than anything which the degenerate age of Constantine could produce.

We can hardly blame Constantine for his vandalism. A victorious dictator must have monuments, which are a necessary form of propaganda, and if the art of the present is too poor to adorn them, the art of the past must be pressed into service. After all, there is one thing a dictator cannot do—he cannot create artists. Trajan, too, had been in his grave for some two centuries; he would raise no objections. A dead man need not mind being robbed when few of those who are alive escape the same fate. And incidentally the act showed the servile Roman public that a greater man than Trajan had arrived.

The decay of art may not seem to the plain man a very serious matter. At times such as that of Constantine, the plain man has other things to think of—how to avoid being plundered by bandits and officials (the latter were the worse), and how to keep his head in its place on his shoulders. When art is in decay we may be pretty sure that it is only a symptom that everything else is in decay; and times of decay are not pleasant to live in—save for gangsters and those who live by graft.

Comparing our own days with those of Constantine, we may certainly pride ourselves upon one thing—there is no lack of artistic technique amongst us. We do not need to plunder the

Albert Memorial to embellish our latter-day monuments. And this applies not only in sculpture, but in every branch of art—in music, painting, literature, the drama, the screen, and so on. In every one of them the technique is amazing. The average good detective novel, or the average successful play, or the best American film, or even the average Academy picture, are all alike in one thing. Whether you admire them or loathe them, you have to admit that they are not only clever, but almost miraculously so. Writers, painters, directors, actors all know their job supremely well. And it is not only in the various branches of art that skill is plentiful; there is the same display of almost superhuman skill in the complementary spheres of industry and sport. Consider the diabolical ingenuity of the modern internal combustion engine, whether it is attached to a baby car or to a fighting aeroplane with a speed of some two or three hundred miles an hour. And in all branches of sport the skill is such that a modest player, who plays only for amusement, can hardly get anyone to give him a game. Even our flappers play tennis like professionals.

Technique and skill, then, are at their maximum amongst us: here we have the pull over the bunglers who had to raid ancient monuments at the beginning of the fourth century. But we need not be too complacent, and for one quite sufficient reason. Our skill is admirable, perhaps too admirable, but (this is the point) *it is in nearly every case a perverted skill*. This is a very serious charge and it must be made good.

We may take in order the arts of literature, music, painting, the drama, and the two new arts created by modern scientific technique, the screen and the radio. All display incredible skill, but the skill is directed to one end—a perverted end. All the time the object is the very opposite of that which should be the object (and *is* the object) of all sincere art. Our modern art-skill is directed not to reveal, but to obscure, reality—to shut it away from our eyes, to cover it up, to tone it down, to create dreams and fantasies. Our artists of every kind rush to provide us with—what? Reality? No: but an escape from it. All that miraculous technique has but one motive—to distract our attention from actuality. The motive of art to-day is the dope motive. But note the subtlety of it. It does not aim, as one might imagine it

would, at keeping us from thinking. So long as we are burdened with minds at all we are bound to think. But our art can, and does, keep us from thinking to any purpose. The motive of art to-day is the motive of the cross-word puzzle. Art keeps us busy—uselessly. It is like the ‘comforter,’ fortified with a dusting of sugar, which tired mothers give their infants to suck. That is the job of art in these days—to keep us *un*-aware, to lull us gently into apathy and acquiescence. It does the job extremely well.

The various arts will provide us with instances. In literature the most characteristic product of the present day is the crime story, a class of book immensely popular with the educated classes (the same class that falls for the lure of the cross-word). The attraction of this class of literature is twofold. It provides the reader with a complex intellectual puzzle; and it transports him at the same time into a world which, though superficially exactly like his own (all crime tales have a conventional middle-class background—an Oxford college, a country house, a West-end club, or a flat in Kensington), is as unreal as the *mise en scène* of ‘Alice Through the Looking-glass.’ Neither criminals nor policemen read this literature, which they know to be a fake. Not dissimilar from the crime story is the autobiography of the tough character—the hobo, gangster, or up-to-date Casanova. Here there seems to be an atmosphere of ‘real’ life. But it is the picturesque rather than the real that is found in these entertaining pages. This sort of escape literature is particularly insidious because it professes to portray honestly the seamy side of modern civilization. Satires on science (e.g. *Brave New World*), are another morbid sign.

To pass to another form of art—music. The two forms of music most in vogue to-day are jazz and crooning for the low-brow, and discordant, unmelodious symphonic compositions for the high-brow. Jazz and crooning have been correctly described as *massage*—massage of the emotions. When we scratch our dog’s ears he enjoys it; and the crooner gives us precisely the same pleasure in precisely the same way. One could exhaust the language of contempt over the crooner’s art, and still leave much unsaid. Its technique, it goes without saying, is wonderful, as all modern artistic technique is. Jazz, as we know, is a very primitive form of music; its home is in Haiti and the Central

African jungle. Its cultural level is that of hoodoo. The negro is getting his own back on the European who has enslaved and debased him by covertly sapping our culture.

There is of course more than a little in common between the broken, drunken, slightly paralytic rhythms of jazz and the cacophony of the modern symphony. It has been observed that harmony expresses the feeling of man-in-society — of man 'conscious of himself as an individual living in a world where the interweaving lives of society reflect the orchestral pageant of growing and developing nature.'¹ It is not without significance that the great masters of the symphony brought their miraculous art to perfection when complex European society was developing in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thus it may well be that the disintegrated rhythms of jazz and the noisy disharmony of modern music are the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual disintegration and disharmony in the society which has produced them. They are symptoms of disaster — like the shudder and lurch of a railway coach when it leaves the metals.

We may pass on to the art of painting, which displays two apparently diverse but quite closely associated characteristics, both symptoms of the same malady. There is in the first place popular pictorial art, which has been hard hit by the development of photography. To this class belong those portraits of our plutocracy which adorn the walls of Burlington House as May comes round each year. To this class belong also the whole genus of sporting pictures, pictures of pet dogs with or without their owners, of grouse moors, of autumn mornings with the pheasants, of those pockets of unspoiled English country which have been preserved by rich men; pictures of Oxford from Boar's Hill, and so on. All this 'commodity art' is turned out to supply a demand, and ministers to the vanity and complacency of those who sign the cheques for it. Other lines in commodity art are whimsical pictures of fairies or children, suggestive nudes, perhaps pictures of some classical scene, or of some locality in the Mediterranean.

The highbrows, with every justification, regard all this 'venal' art with contempt. But their own art is equally pitiable, though

¹ Christopher Caudwell, *Illusion and Reality*, p. 257.

less popular. The rebel artist, refusing to turn out marketable trash, and despising all 'representative' art, which he regards as trivial or childish, turns his back on the objective world around him and takes refuge in the cavern of the sub-conscious, or in an abstract world of mathematical forms. You get cubism, surrealism, symbolism, and so forth. This ultra-progressive school of painting is the counterpart of the cacophonous modern orchestral music to which reference has already been made; and the infantile scrawls which do duty for pictures show the same cult of the primitive which you get in jazz. It is a sign of the times that the modern artist in search of a style or a subject goes not, as did the pre-Raphaelites, to the Middle Ages but to some pre-civilized society. We shall have occasion to note later this morbid symptom of a retreat from civilization to some primitive mentality and its products.

To pass on to drama and the cinema. The popularity of the late Sir James Barrie's work in England (I do not know if it is equally popular in the country of his birth) is highly significant. The appeal of his plays lies in their 'whimsicality' and in their idealization of childhood—a childhood which lasts for ever. In his best-known play our Peter Pans who suffer from a psychological arrest find an excuse for their failure to grow up. Also, in these days of a declining birth-rate, the child is a sort of mascot, and Barrie trades on this.

As for the cinema, we have here the most extreme instance of miraculous technique harnessed to quite frivolous ends. The cinema is the most efficient escape-mechanism that has ever been invented—far better than the gin-palace of old times. Moreover, it serves the proletariat as well as the middle classes. So long as we have the cinema and commercialized football the proletariat will give no trouble to their masters in England. The new dope is far more efficacious than the old kind with which Lenin was so obsessed, and should certainly be subsidized as generously as the sugar-beet industry.

Thus every branch of art amongst us to-day utilises its marvellous technique (if the above analysis is correct) not to establish fuller contact with reality and to deepen our consciousness of it, but to provide us with a means of escape from reality which, for one reason or another, we do not wish to face. This

means, of course, that art is cut off from its own source—experience, which is why it withers in spite of its technique; for after all the technique has only a money motive.

But it may be alleged that even if art is, as suggested, in full retreat from reality, this does not so much matter inasmuch as science—so much more important in the modern world than art—must always remain in close touch with reality and so keep our culture within the bounds of sanity. Many persons of liberal sympathies and Philistine traditions pin their whole faith upon science. But though such faith is laudable there are two *caveats* to be put in with regard to it. The first is that though the theories of science may be accepted, there is often some reluctance to put them into practice. Medical science, for example, has indicated what measures are necessary to improve our national physique and standard of health; it is largely, we are told, a matter of adequate nourishment, fresh air, exercise, and absence of overwork and worry. But all these things are expensive luxuries which our economic system cannot afford to guarantee to any but a comparatively small section of the population. Science can demand better physical conditions for our working-class population, but if this causes taxation to rise and foreign markets to be lost, the scientist is told where he gets off.

Secondly, science, like everything else, has become an affair of specialists who know more and more about less and less. Thus the outlook of the majority of scientists has become astonishingly narrow compared with that of their predecessors of half a century ago. Men of science for the most part are entirely lacking in any synthetic world-view into which to fit their embarrassing discoveries. The results of scientific research only increase the present confusion of ideas among the public. A number of scientists identify themselves with some popular creed which has no connection whatever with their work. Perhaps they regard reality as essentially unknowable, and so slip into orthodoxy by the convenient by-pass of scepticism. Those who do not act thus hasten to interpret the world in terms of the particular corner of science in which they themselves are interested, and things thus left unaccounted for—let us say physics, chemistry or biology—are reduced to the level of the other facts by the crude ‘nothing but’ method.

Thus we should not pin too much faith on the scientist; like the artist, he will let us down. He is too often rendered both practically and philosophically impotent by the system under which he works, by his own narrowness of outlook, or by his sheer agnosticism or credulity. For make no mistake about it, the scientist outside his own tiny zareba can be the most credulous of persons, and especially does this seem to be true of the physicist.

To return now, for a moment, to Constantine. His looting of Trajan's memorial was, we agree, a bad sign. But it was a bad sign *not* because of its vandalism. The much-lauded mediæval architects were all vandals; they ruthlessly scrapped their predecessors' work *and replaced it by better*. But this was just what Constantine could not do. *His* act was a sign that art was dead, and for this reason alone it was a bad sign.² It was a sign that civilization was dying.

If any considerable portion of what has been said in this paper about art and science in our time is true, all that, too, is a bad sign—the same kind of bad sign as was Constantine's petty larceny. That *our* civilization is in decay is a conclusion that we shall reach only with regret; and yet, is there not something wrong with us, some spiritual malady that can perhaps be diagnosed and, if taken in its early stages, cured?

The chief symptoms of our malady (if the contentions put forward above are not altogether wide of the mark) is *a decline of respect amongst us for what has been called the 'reality-principle.'* Our intelligence presents us with realities, and if we are in a healthy state we accept them, face them, and (if they are hostile) do our best to overcome them. If we are not in a healthy state, we shirk facing anything we do not like about reality; we pretend it is not there, drape it over with camouflage, and only take a very small peep at it now and then, if at all. Art provides the camouflage; and as for science, its extreme specialization enables us to concentrate on reality, a spot at a time. We do not like the dragon, so we look, not at *it*, but at a

² Vandalism is never a crime in an age of artistic vitality. Our own respect for the past, our zeal for ruins and so on, is a sign that we are growing old. The gaze of the old is always fixed on the past; their lives are not lived in expectation, but in regret.

scale or two here and there through a magnifying glass. Such is the situation; our nerve has failed us. We do not *like* reality, and we think that this is so much the worse for reality, and not for ourselves. This fear of reality is responsible for the present reaction against reason. The intelligence, or the reason, is a comparatively lately-developed product. The instinctive impulses of the human animal are far older and far stronger. The eighteenth-century divine spoke of the 'little corner of rationality' in the ark of Noah; it would be no less appropriate to speak of the tiny corner of rationality in the average human being.

'In each of us lies the dark lake from which our conscious reasoning selves have gradually emerged; strange emanations dance by night, or at solitary moments, on its surface; still stranger shapes appear to inhabit its hidden depths. Some of us love to dream on the banks of this mysterious mere; some try to fish or dive in it; others labour to brick it over.'³

What is more natural, then, than that we should be guided by the instinctive, rather than by the rational, part of our nature? The instincts, surely, know best! Why all this nervous, fidgety rationalizing, this eternal debate within ourselves? Why not act without forethought and without afterthought, as the animals do? The American poet Whitman, in whose country reason had been dethroned by a bitter civil war, was the first to plead for a return to the animals, who do not bemoan their fate or worry over right and wrong.

Whitman has had his successors. After a yet more devastating and widespread war, a prophet of the instincts—the late D. H. Lawrence—arose in England to urge us to think with the blood and to despise reason. Mr. Yeats even goes further, and urges us to think with the *marrow*:

'God save me from the thoughts men think
In the mind alone.
He that sings a lasting song
Thinks in a marrow bone.'⁴

This cult of the preconscious and instinctive makes a strong appeal amongst those, and they are many, who are discontented with modern industrial civilization and its products—ugliness, poverty, unemployment, overwork, noise, worry, war and taxation. It was just against civilization as we know it to-day that

³ F. L. Lucas, *The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal*, p. 31.

⁴ Quoted by Lucas, *op cit.*, p. 139.

Lawrence was in revolt. But of course he was off the mark. The mistake he made was to imagine that what was wrong with modern civilization, which he rightly saw to be the product of applied science, was that reason played too large a part in it and so imposed too great a burden upon the instinctive animal, man, who broke down under the strain. The truth is, of course, that just the opposite is the case. Reason plays not too large, but far too small, a part in modern civilization. If reason were allowed to function so far as to lessen to any appreciable extent the degree of poverty, overwork, ill-health and anxiety which at present prevails among large sections of the population of every European country, we need not doubt that the prevalence of neuroses would diminish. Applied reason could abolish poverty and remove the economic causes of war; it could cure overpopulation; it could increase production of necessities and create an era of plenty, if it were not held up.

It is a mistake to suppose, as Lawrence would appear to have done, that civilization necessarily represses and frustrates the individual. That modern industrial civilization does so is beyond dispute, but that is not the fault of civilization as such. In a civilization in which reason played a larger part than it does in our own, the individual would be liberated and his capacities and potentialities extended. Lawrence urged a return to the remote past; but the solution of our troubles is not to be found in retreat but in courageous advance—not in any denial or repudiation of reason, but in affirming it and following it.

As a matter of fact, it is our failure to apply reason fully in action that has led to the discrediting of reason amongst us to-day. The truth is that we are refusing to apply reason to the one end which it was designed to serve. Man developed this highly efficient instrument to enable him to deal successfully with his environment, and even to create a new environment, both material and spiritual. If man for any cause—whether indolence, cowardice, or, as is the case to-day, greed and sectional interests—ceases to use this instrument for that purpose, *i.e.* for *action*, the tool either goes blunt or turns and cuts him. The characteristic feature of reason is that it can only remain healthy and vigorous and develop further strength and effectiveness by coming into active conflict with the environment. Reason

is a weapon and should always be used as such. It should not be greased and put away, but used. Still less should it be hung up as a trophy or placed in a museum. The proper business of reason is to guide action, and any use of it which does not ultimately affect action is a perversion of a good thing to a bad end.

If reason is not used to guide action it may wilt and atrophy; people react against it, as they are doing now, and pin their faith on emotion, intuition, the blood, the marrow, and so forth. People refuse to think for themselves and place their trust in a leader, who retains his hold over them by stirring up mob emotion, using stage tricks, mass propaganda, hate-drill, and all kinds of mumbo jumbo with flags, massed aeroplane flights, processions, drum beatings and what not. The technique is highly developed in the political world; but it exists also in the religious sphere. Only here instead of cheers you get hymn-singing; instead of political speeches, testifyings and confessions; instead of hate-drill, hearty back-slapping.

But if one product of the segregation of reason from action is the emotionalist and mob-follower, another scarcely less regrettable product is the intellectualist, the idealist, the superior person, the academic high-brow.

To some here this may seem a hard saying, but I will endeavour to make it good. At the risk of being tedious I will repeat that the right rôle for reason is to *guide action*. For this purpose alone it was developed. It originally separated itself from action (action was once merely instinctive, hardly conscious, and certainly not rational), and it can only keep healthy and develop by continually returning into action.⁵ But what happens if, for one cause or another, reason eschews action, as it is doing now? If one wants the answer to this question one can study mediaeval scholasticism, which ended, it is highly interesting to note, in complete scepticism, expressed in the doctrine that a proposition might be true theologically but untrue philosophically (a doctrine which we see reconditioned for use to-day by our Catholic apologists). The mediaeval scholastics were highly ingenious persons; they were intellectuals *par excellence*, but their intellectual activity (save when they borrowed—which

⁵ This point is very well put by Caudwell in the valuable book already quoted. See pages 32 and following.

was often—from contemporary Arabian science) was totally barren.

The reason for this was that their minds were working in the void—*bombinantes in vacuo*. The results of their mental activity were purely verbal and formal, and had no contact with reality. Their minds were active in the same useless way as a car engine is active before the clutch has been let in. In the case of the scholastic mental engine, there *was* no clutch and no transmitting mechanism. Archimedes said, Give me a fulcrum and I will shift the world! But the scholastics had no fulcrum, and if they had found one they would have used it as a point of balance in which to play see-saw interminably. Similar to the scholastics were the Alexandrine scholars of the later Roman Empire, who had critical but no creative ability. Their futility was due to the same cause—reason was divorced from action. How *could* reason act in the days of the Decline and Fall, when the rule was in the hands of dictators and soldiers?

Mental activity, divorced from action, takes on a quality of remoteness and unreality, and the results of such thinking are largely verbal and formal. Such thinking claims to be rational, but it is barren and leads nowhere: it is devitalized because it is out of contact with the source of vitality—action. This blind-alley thinking is quite as contemptible as mere emotionalism: for the emotionalist can act—even if he acts wrongly.

Few would claim that reason is to-day applied in action to anything like the extent that is possible and desirable. We know that but for the immobilization of reason, vast resources might be made available for human betterment. 'Reason has not failed us,' writes Professor Hogben, 'it has not yet been given the chance.' 'It is not that we are in danger of suffering from too much science, but from too little; what is used is largely applied to anti-social ends,' says Professor Levy.

Science is more than ever necessary to-day if our complex civilization is to progress—or even survive: yet we know that scientific research is to-day being stultified by a refusal to use its results. Discoveries are not utilized if this would conflict with commercial interests. It is to this holding-up of reason from action, that the present fear of reason, and the present degeneration in our attitude is due—whether that degeneration takes the

shape of a denial of reason or of mere academic and scholastic trifling.

People are continually saying, with a pious resignation, that this is a mad world. There are indeed manifest signs of madness: for example, with one hand we set scientists to produce a breed of cow that will yield large quantities of milk, while with the other we divert the milk, so produced, away from the life of the growing infant or nursing mother, into a factory for umbrella handles!

It is this kind of stultification of science that is typical of our social and economic unreasonableness: and if at the back of all our activity is a fear of applying reason, is it any wonder that to *every* sphere, artistic and religious as well as practical, a flight from reason should be in evidence? We have made 'the great refusal,' and the results are manifest in our spiritual life. God has given science to man, and man is throwing the gift back in His face. Is it any wonder that He is leaving us to the results of our madness? Those results are decay in art, decay in religion, and sooner or later convulsions and collapse. Our civilization does not *deserve* to survive!

But it is time to sum up. My thesis is that to-day there is a conspicuous flight from reality in the sphere of art, in spite of the miraculous technical skill everywhere displayed. Parallel with this there is widespread distrust of reason; our guides tell us to think, not with the head, but with the blood and the marrow; our religious leaders tell us to trust instinct and 'guidance' and mystical emotion; while our political leaders tell us to trust *them*! (After so many insults our reason is only slightly wounded by this final absurdity!) Meanwhile our intellectuals are in full retreat and, like Plato (that gentlemanly Fascist), are ready to turn their backs upon everything for which their less panic-stricken predecessors stood. Reason they still claim to believe in, but it is Plato's reason, secure in a supra-sensible world of ideal values. Not reason in action, reason in dirt, in the factory, in the council chamber. No. For them reason is too holy a thing to handle with unwashed hands.

Meanwhile the young flock into various anti-rational movements—into Groupism, Fascism, Catholicism (the vaunted rationalism of the scholastics, of the mind moving in a circle—a

caterpillar movement, round and round). And our middle-aged? Surely there are not any; we are all young nowadays! At any rate our folly is equal and our courage a good deal less. Detective novels and cross-word puzzles are our *métier*. And meanwhile the abyss is not very far away, awaiting us to slip into it. Reason, the barrier that holds us back, is weakening. The fence is rocky. It is giving way. One can hear the crack. It sounds — what does it sound like? Like the cymbal of a jazz orchestra? Or the explosion of an incendiary bomb? Or simply like the crack of doom?

CHRISTIANITY AND COMMUNISM

By JOSEPH NEEDHAM, M.A., Sc.D.,

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THERE are evidently more ways than one in which this subject could be introduced. For example, we might discuss the 'essence' of Christianity and contrast it with the 'essence' of Communism, but this would have the disadvantage that we might not find ourselves in general agreement even about the essence of Christianity. What is sometimes called the revolutionary interpretation of the Gospels, an interpretation which I should tend to take if I adopted this course, would perhaps not commend itself to all members of the Conference. This, it is true, would not be a matter for any surprise, for I may confess to the belief that however great may be the advances made by Biblical criticism, we shall never arrive at a certainty of knowledge concerning the meaning and nature of the events recorded in the Gospels such as we should call satisfactory in natural science. My own opinion is that in the absence of such certainty we must accept the myth which most commends itself to us on other grounds.

I propose therefore to take an altogether different way, a way more in keeping with such qualifications as I have as a scientific worker, and to leave out of account for the moment specifically Christian concepts in drawing a picture of the development of our world. From the broad outlines of this picture we can, I believe, draw certain conclusions which bear very strongly upon the problem in hand. We must, in short, trace the development of the earth from its origin as a ball of incandescent gas to the state in which we know it to-day, and if we do this we shall realize more clearly that the state in which we know it to-day is not, to a very high degree of possibility, its final state. If, moreover, we can detect any principle existing among the terrific changes which have been passed through, we shall be able to gain some idea of the most likely direction which future change is to take. Such a plan relieves us also of any tendency to concentrate on minor difficulties and controversies.

Among these I am forced to mention one in passing. The subject upon which we are now engaged, Christianity and Communism, is so frequently the scene of ridiculous atrocity statistics—in the use of which a former Dean of St. Paul's is one of the worst offenders—that I wish to emphasize my complete abstention from this topic. In the long history of the countless struggles between races, peoples, ideas and economic systems, infinite blood has been shed, and since men are still far from perfect, it is being shed at this day, even at this very hour. And if any reply were needed to the monotonous but never very well-authenticated stories of ill-treatment of monks and nuns, it could be said that no cause has had more martyrs than that of the working-class, from the three Leveller corporals 'shot to death' in Burford churchyard three centuries since, to the thousands massacred in the Paris of 1871 and the innumerable victims of Mussolini, Hitler and Franco. But it is with a calmer mind that we must give consideration to what science and history together teach us.

The principle to which reference was made just now may be expressed, I believe, as the presence in our world's development of a progressive increase in the level of organization. Possibly I may explain it best by taking first of all the transition from the lifeless to the living. Biologists and physicists are now in general agreement that what distinguishes the living organism from a mere mixture of its chemical components is the form of organization exhibited by protoplasm while alive. There are, of course, plenty of inferior forms of order; for example, the order of homogeneous gases or liquids, or the more complicated conditions existing in colloidal liquids, or the very highly complicated structure of the 'liquid crystals.' In these latter forms of organization we find rigidity not in all three dimensions of space, as in ordinary crystals, but in two or only in one. Such combined rigidity and flexibility is reminiscent of the living organism itself, and indeed we now have excellent grounds for believing that a good deal of the organization of living beings is built upon the liquid crystalline condition, existing actually in the protoplasm. In the transition from lifeless to living, therefore, we have a fundamental step up in level of organization.

It is needless to say that a wonderful organization exists at

the level of 'inorganic' matter itself, namely in the arrangements of electrons, protons and other particles to form the eighty-three known chemical elements. Furthermore, the capacity of certain of these elements (such as silicon, and especially carbon) to unite with themselves, forming atomic chains, rings, lattices, etc., gives rise to another increase in level of organization as the system of macromolecules known to 'organic' chemistry comes into existence.

When once the living cell is given as a datum, however, we pass into the realm of comparative morphology, beginning with the simplest aggregations of single cells into multi-celled organisms. Here we have a field which has been reduced to order by generations of zoologists and botanists, a field where the guiding principle is again no other than level of organization. At one time the limits of what can be done at a given level of organization are reached; at another, these limits are transcended by further increases in effector devices and the means of controlling them. Side by side with such developments goes the perfecting of the various receptor mechanisms. It may be noted that the conception of maximum level of organization is a relative one; it depends on how free of its environment the organism proposes to be and what exactly it proposes to do. Thus the famous tapeworm, which always enters into these discussions, is very well adapted to its mode of life, but at the same time remarkably unenterprising. In general there is no reasonable possibility of denying that the higher mammals represent a maximum of organization level, superior to all earlier and simpler forms. That is to say, the number of parts in the whole is maximal, as is the complexity of their structure and inter-relations; the centralization and efficiency of the humoral and neural means of control of the periphery is maximal; the flexibility and versatility of actions on the environment is maximal; and, finally, independence of the environment is maximal.¹

Moreover, we must think of sociological development as continuous with biological. Just as the first free-living single cells had to give up their 'freedom,' such as it was, in uniting together to form the metazoan organisms, so the beginnings of

¹ On this subject see the address of J. S. Huxley, *Ann. Rep. Brit. Assoc.* 1936.

social organization required the first glimmerings of 'altruism,' the first renunciations of dominant impulses. From the first ape-like families, in which the leaders were killed off in turn by the younger males, through all the gamut of savagery, the stages of which we can reconstruct to some extent by observation of still existing primitive societies, to the first stable settled communities, from the desert to the sown, we see a rise in the level of organization. The first attainment of efficient agriculture, the first invention of crude engineering and chemical devices, the first segregation of classes, such as warriors, peasants, merchants and governors—all these steps were steps towards that high level of organization which we mean by the term 'civilized.'

All this, you may say, is agreed to; we accept it. No doubt after many years of struggle the fundamentals of evolution are not seriously questioned. But there follows a conclusion which many seem to find less agreeable, namely, that if wisdom was not born with us, it will certainly not die with us. Can we have the presumption to suppose that we ourselves are the crown of the evolutionary process, the highest production of which nature is capable? On the contrary, the present is but one term in a succession of terms. And if we look back upon the past as a chaos compared with our own high level of organization, it is extremely probable that men of the future will look back upon our own age as an age of chaos. At that time, they will say, the world was divided up into a rather large number of states and nations, none of which in practice recognized any superior moral law restricting their sovereignty. The world's natural resources were the property of private men, who from their chance ownership derived personal benefit, only allowing others access to these resources on their own terms. Similarly the machinery of production, in factory or mill, was private property, so that the vast majority of men owned no tools but their hands, for the use of which they were paid the barest minimum by the owners of the machines. This state of affairs did not conduce to any kind of comradeship or happiness in social intercourse, whether Christian or otherwise. And lastly, in the exchange of commodities, the system of almost unregulated profit-seeking by the individual prevailed. What a contrast, they will say, to our own level of organization. The U.S.S.R. (a fine old term, full of

historical associations) now unites the habitable globe into a whole, the peoples of which retain as much as possible of their ancient customs, languages, poetry and art, but severally possess no economic independence or national sovereignty. World planning of economics and population naturally followed the acquisition by humanity collectively of all the world's natural resources and productive machinery. The abolition of economic privilege led naturally to the classless state. We are, in short, to use the ancient term, communists.

But, they would add, it was not without the centuries of struggle. It is here that we find the difference between the views now described and what used to be known as 'Victorian optimism.' The conception of Progress, as it used to be held, was unsatisfactory on two main counts: it mistook its units on the time-scale, and it tended to confuse organization with complexity or mere numerical size. Its optimism, which was certainly doomed to disappointment, lay in the fact that while willing to think in terms of geological time where biological evolution was concerned, it wished to think in terms of ten-year periods for sociological evolution. The confusion of its thought arose from an absurd simplification of the idea of organization. Numerical complexity may enter into an organizational level, but it need not do so, and sometimes increase in organizational level may even involve a decrease in numerical complexity. For example, the fusion of the English railway systems led to a standardization of locomotive parts, so that now very large areas of the country can be immediately supplied from store with any spare in the event of a locomotive breakdown, whereas previously there were hundreds of different designs each with different spare parts. Only one further step is desirable—the fusion of all the systems into one under public ownership. The question of numerical complexity is of much interest in connection with a point already mentioned, the classless state. At first sight it might seem as if a society with two, three, or four classes must be more complicated, and hence more highly organized, than a classless one. But an obvious biological analogy provides the answer. We might as well assert that an annelid worm with twenty or thirty ganglia down the length of its body was more highly organized than a mammal with a single highly-developed

brain. But the contrary is the case. The analogy repays thought. Similarly, it is obvious that until the multiplicity of amoral national sovereignties has been utterly abolished, no lasting peace will be possible for the world. The conception of the utmost cultural autonomy for different peoples, side by side with economic union, is a grand one, and we owe it largely to the genius of no other than Joseph Vissarionovitch Stalin, the present secretary of the Russian Communist Party, under whom it is largely being put into practice in that country and its dependencies.² Such a reunion as that of the International Folk-dance Congress a year or two ago in London was a living demonstration of the cultural possibilities which exist in the future; the good as opposed to the evil in the idea of 'the national.'

The view of the world's history which has thus been outlined is one of only moderate optimism. In the end, in the words of Julian of Norwich, all shall be well, but not in our time, nor for long to come. Nevertheless that great force, if so we may consider it, which has brought about the evolutionary development of our earth, and of the life upon it, is beyond reasonable doubt still at work, and in this sense collectivism is inevitable. Life itself is essentially order and organization; man in his societies cannot be untrue to it. In W. H. Auden's recent poem 'Spain' we find :

And the poor in their fireless lodgings, dropping the sheets
Of the evening paper : ' Our day is our loss, O show us
History the operator, the
Organizer, Time the refreshing river.'

For us, therefore, time is a refreshing river, no stagnant pool; it brings higher organizational levels, and from our very nature we gain refreshment from them. What, then, is the meaning of all this for the Christian? After all, for him the vast evolutionary development which we have been describing is the manner in which God's creativity has been at work. He cannot forget the second of the two books from which Sir Thomas Browne collected his divinity, 'that open and publick manuscript which lies expans'd unto the eyes of all.' He will not wish to lag behind the heathen in his examination of nature. And so we come to the important conclusion that the Christian *must* take

² See e.g. his *Marxism and the National Question*.

collectivism seriously. Theologians in the past have placed too much emphasis on the individualism of Christianity, perhaps because they have tended to pay too much attention to the first great commandment at the expense of the second. That this should have been so during the history of the Church is no matter for surprise. The Church has existed, not in a vacuum, but in an economic world where exploitation, whether in feudal or capitalist forms, was always going on. Since theologians and clergy are not much less weak nor more clear-sighted than other men, it was natural that the other-worldly elements in Christianity should be emphasized. Hence the value of the Church in the eyes of the feudal lord and the capitalist employer. To this trend there have been, of course, noteworthy exceptions. But it was always amply sufficient to deserve the bitter accusations of hypocrisy which such men as Marx levelled at it, and the irony of the situation is that these accusations might have come with at least equal force from the Apostles themselves.

The Christian *must* take collectivism seriously. He will find that his own ethos is perfectly congruent with it, as witness the communism of the Church of Jerusalem; a factor which might be expected to be particularly attractive to Anglicans, so enamoured of the pure and primitive, but, for reasons at which we may guess, not in practice. But now some may attempt to persuade him that the proper collectivism for him is not Communism but Fascism. Under Fascism, they will say, the institutional fabric of the Church is (or will be) maintained perfectly intact; the administration of the rites and sacraments will be fully safeguarded (by police action if necessary), and all that will be asked of you, as an ecclesiastic, is not to poke your nose into what does not concern you, namely business, on the one hand; and, on the other, to convince your people from time to time that the nation to which they belong is particularly favoured of God and particularly ill-treated by other nations. I wish to suggest to you that this invitation strikes the authentic diabolic note, and to warn you that you are being asked in such a case to sell the whole of the spirit of Christianity for the letter.³

In the first place, Fascism is not collectivism at all. Fascism

³ Cf. the fine but too little known satire of Robert Nichols in his *Fantastica*.

is the forcible (not to say violent) stabilization of the existing economic organization, the process of making the world safe for the profit-making motive. Nevertheless it uses collectivist 'emotion' for its own purposes, as *e.g.* in the Nazi slogan 'Gemeinnutz vor Eigennutz,' and it extends a varying measure of government control over business operations, much as in the British Defence of the Realm Act during the last war, when there was a temporary nationalization of the mercantile marine. The socialism of 'National Socialism' reduces in the end to organized charities such as the 'Winterhilfe,' and minor concessions such as the 'Kraft durch Freude' movement or the Italian 'Dopolavoro.' These paradoxes arise from the fact that the most civilized masses of humanity have to-day reached a level at which collectivism is the only possible next step, and hence any appeal to them has to be made in appropriate terms. This is why a false appeal, such as that of Fascism, will inevitably recoil upon its makers. The disillusioned masses will never return to liberal individualism, but may very well pass to true collectivism; hence the frantic enmity with which the Fascist leaders pursue the spectre of Bolshevism. To retain the essentials of the capitalist economic organization, it has been necessary to make wide and far-reaching modifications of the non-essentials. Thus it has been necessary to abolish all civil liberties, such as the right of free speech, free association, and the like. These civil liberties grew up with capitalism, for without them capitalism, or freedom of financial and economic exploitation, could never have struggled loose from the petrified mediaeval organization. In the English Civil War and the French Revolution they won decisive victories. But now, when the time has come for a fresh change, capitalism in its turn has become the strait waistcoat which must, and will, be broken. To-day we have only two alternatives, capitalism or civil liberties, for, as Fascism demonstrates, we cannot have both.

It is here that many Christian social thinkers make a fundamental mistake, namely, that of throwing all Communist and Fascist States together under the term 'totalitarian' and of objecting to all equally under the aegis of that ancient dualism which regards the spiritual order as existing within, but absolutely independent of, the temporal order. Pope and Emperor

are held to be concepts eternally applicable. Such thinkers have not sufficiently acquainted themselves with the theoretical structure of Communism and Fascism respectively. The Fascist theory of dictatorship rests upon a psycho-biological valuation of humanity which divides men fundamentally into the leaders and the led. On this 'Führer-prinzip' those naturally gifted with powers of command must be entrusted with leadership, which they must utilize for the aggrandizement of the race to which they belong at the expense of other, inferior, races. This hierarchy of dictators is something permanent, a natural organization of men, the lot of the majority of whom must ever be to obey without question the decisions of their superiors. The Communist theory of dictatorship, on the other hand, as cannot be too much emphasized, is that it is transient, not permanent. The 'dictatorship of the proletariat' means that during the years immediately succeeding the taking over of power by the representatives of the working-class (the class which is pledged to abolish classes) there will be endless efforts at wrecking by the representatives of those who have been dispossessed of their privilege, wealth and authority, and therefore a period of 'authoritarian' rule will be necessary. As this generation dies out, however, and as new generations arise, imbued from birth with the ideals of service to their brothers in the workers' state, this dictatorship becomes unnecessary and will 'wither away.' Under a properly-designed education, each man will be his own dictator, 'every cook will learn to rule the state.' It need not be pointed out that such self-government is a Christian ideal. Nor is it necessary to say that leadership is a real quality also for the Communist. The difference between Fascist and Communist conceptions of leadership essentially resides in this, that the former is leadership from above, while the latter is leadership from within. Which of these two is in agreement with the comradeship of the apostolic circle, I leave it to you to decide.

On three counts Fascism stands condemned if its representatives seek to come before you presenting it as that true collectivism indicated as the law of nature by a scientific study of the open and public manuscript of the world. First, its attitude to internationalism demonstrates that it fiercely opposes any union of the peoples. From the further increase of preda-

tory imperialism we have nothing but misery to expect, and we have only to look at the events in Abyssinia, Spain and China, now proceeding during this very Conference, to see proof of it. Secondly, its theoretical justification of war sees it on the side of death as against life. 'War,' Mussolini has said, 'is to man what childbirth is to woman.' Fascist foreign policy is based on the inevitability of war. Such an attitude can only be called Christian if Christianity is interpreted in its most utterly pessimistic form, if the natural world is regarded as evil and irredeemable, having as its only function the preparation of the soul by grievous trials for the life eternal and elsewhere. This, however, I believe to be Manichaeism, not Christianity. I am far from denying that war provides opportunities for the display of the most heroic Christian virtues, but I believe it is nonsense to pretend that the day-to-day conflict of man with nature does not provide equal opportunities, only overlooked because they are so universal. Here there is a great lesson to be learnt from the essay of William James on the 'moral equivalent' of war, and one of the few attractive things about the Nazi régime in Germany is its 'Arbeitspflicht' for the young, though this has been done in a far larger though less spectacular and less manual-military way in the Soviet Union. Thirdly, Fascism is largely built upon a biologically false conception of race which not only, as Hitler boasted on attaining power, destroys all the principles of the French Revolution, but also destroys the doctrine that God 'hath made of one blood all the peoples upon earth.'

As against these facts, Communism seeks the unification of all peoples, not as the wage-earning masses of capitalism, but as free men and women who own collectively the tools with which they work. Communism seeks the abolition of war, recognizing, however, that so long as economic rivalries and armament profits coexist with national sovereignties, war will continue. Communism accepts all races and peoples in fraternal equality. These things are surely of the spirit of Christianity.

An American friend recounted to me the other day an observation made to him in all seriousness by a Philadelphia business man who was strongly anti-religious. 'If it hadn't been for all this Christianity,' he said, 'we should never have had all this Socialism.' He was perfectly right. Communism has been

called the heir of the Christian tradition. Whether you think this statement justified or no, the struggle will go on, and the issue is inevitable; how soon or how late, indeed, depends upon such choices and such decisions. The question is not whether Communism will come or no; the question is how much culture you can save from Fascist barbarism, how many martyrdoms you can prevent. For we may remember the proud revolutionary saying, that all the battles of the working-class are defeats, except the last.

CHRISTIANITY AND FASCISM

By Sir ARNOLD WILSON, M.P.

I MUST begin by an attempt, however inadequate, to define these abstract words. By Christianity I mean, for present purposes, not the particular system or body of doctrines and precepts which we in this country have inherited through sixteen centuries, but rather, in the words of Emerson,

‘the moral sentiment which carries innumerable Christianities, humanities, divinities, within its bosom.’¹

This definition is consistent with Pusey’s declaration that ‘there are afloat hundreds of Christianities.’² I will not seek to define it more closely, for it has never been more difficult to find any formula which would set limits to the development of Christianity without endangering the universality and faithfulness to truth which should be the distinguishing features of the Christian faith.

Nor is it easier, for our purposes, to define Fascism, for it, too, is not static but dynamic and some of, if not all, its official principles are founded upon philosophies which have been endorsed by Christians throughout the ages, and I know none which could be said to be inconsistent with Christian doctrine or dogma. Fascism is different from National Socialism: both differ in principle profoundly from Communism which, whether of the type preached by Lenin or practised by Stalin, or by existing Communist States such as that of Mexico or in certain parts of Spain, is essentially and militantly atheistic. It is wholly inconsistent with the principles of the U.S.S.R., or of any State which has adopted those principles, that the Christian religion should be taught to children, and no person publicly professing belief in Christianity can be a member of the Communist party. To ridicule Christianity by every device and art is part of the accepted methods for the propagation of Communism. The Churches as such may possess no property, may receive no bequests, and are, as a rule, closed to public worship. Concessions

¹ *Representative Men*—Swedenborg. 1847. Wks. I, 330.

² Lenten Sermons, 57.

or relaxations of this last rule, such as have been made recently in Moscow, are for the benefit of tourists and propagandists. Their significance is well understood by the inhabitants. The Fascist State, on the other hand, as authoritatively expounded by Signor Mussolini,

'is not indifferent to religious phenomena in general, nor does it maintain an attitude of indifference to Roman Catholicism, the special, positive religion of Italians. The State has not got a theology but it has a moral code. The Fascist State sees in religion one of the deepest spiritual manifestations and, for this reason, it not only respects religion but defends and protects it. The Fascist State does not attempt, as did Robespierre, to set up a "god" of its own; nor does it vainly seek, as does Bolshevism, to efface God from the soul of man. Fascism respects the God of ascetics, saints and heroes, and it also respects God as conceived by the ingenuous and primitive heart of the people, the God to whom their prayers are raised.'³

The programme of the National Socialist party deals with the attitude of the party towards Christianity in the following terms :

'24. We demand freedom for all religious confessions in the nation, in so far as they do not endanger its existence nor offend the conventional and moral feelings of the Germanic race. The Party itself is an exponent of a positive Christianity without binding itself confessionally to any creed. It fights the Jewish materialistic spirit in and around us, and is convinced that an enduring recovery of our nation can only succeed from within on the basis of "common welfare before selfish interest."'

These are official statements : much depends upon the manner in which they are interpreted from year to year, and from place to place. This depends, in turn, upon two main factors :

(1) The extent to which the Churches have been in the past, or are now, identified directly or indirectly with political movements which run counter to the tide of the Reformation or Renaissance which is implicit in the doctrine and teaching of the totalitarian States; and

(2) The extent to which the totalitarian States feel menaced by the existence, within the State, of corporations, whether religious or secular, loyalty to which may in certain circumstances be incompatible with loyalty to the State itself.

This clash of loyalties underlies all history : it accounts for the persecution of Christians by Jews and Romans, by Chinese and Japanese, and by every pagan race with whom they have come in contact. It accounts for the Reformation movement in

³ *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions*. Ardita Publishers, Rome; 1935.

this country, and for much anti-Semitism. The formation in the sixteenth century in this country of a National Church was an attempt to find a solution of the problem : our action in encouraging a National Christian Church in India was dictated by similar considerations.

We must admit at the outset that it is not possible completely to reconcile the rival claims to the loyalty of Christian men in daily life of the community in which we live and the Church, if any, to which we belong.

The famous passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, in which he declares the religious obligation of obedience to the civil power, has its origin and its authority in the doctrine of Christ Himself. *'Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the Power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment.'* But it is not less evident that St. Peter and the Apostles were faithfully echoing the teaching of their Lord when, on the threshold of Christian history, they gave conspicuous example of disobedience to constituted authority by encountering the prohibition of the high priest with the pregnant declaration, *'we must obey God rather than men.'* The adjustment of these contradictory attitudes of religious submission and conscientious revolt has been the crux of ecclesiastical history from the first century until the present time.

If two authorities, equally possessed of Divine Right to human obedience, can yet come into collision, it is apparent that the Divine Right can in neither case be unlimited, but must be restricted in its rightful exercise. It cannot be pleaded outside its proper sphere. The perennial strife between Church and State has arisen precisely from the transgressing of the appointed limit by one or other. From time to time the attempt has been made to 'cut the Gordian knot' by subjecting one authority to the other, making the Church supreme over the State, as by medieval Popes and Scottish Calvinists, or by making the State supreme over the Church, as by Byzantine Emperors, German Princes, and our own Henry VIII. But the problem is too complicated for such crude and obvious solution. Bishop Stubbs has warned us against underrating the difficulty

of finding any really satisfactory solution of a problem which history seems to show to be insoluble. I quote his words because I can find none other either so luminous or so authoritative :

‘ A perfect solution of the problem involves the old question of the identity between the good man and the good citizen, as well as the modern ideal of a free Church within a free State. Religion, morality, and law overlap one another in almost every region of human action; they approach their common subject-matter from different points and legislate for it with different sanctions. The ideal of perfect harmony between them seems to imply an amount of subordination which is scarcely compatible with freedom; the idea of complete disjunction implies either the certainty of conflict on some if not all parts of the common field of work, or the abdication, on the one part or the other, of some duty which according to its own ideal it is bound to fulfil. The Church, for instance, cannot engross the work of education without some danger to liberty; the State cannot engross it without some danger to religion; the work of the Church without liberty loses half its value; the State without religion does only half its work. And this is only an illustration of what is true throughout. The individual conscience, the spiritual aspiration, the moral system, the legal enactment, will never, in a world of mixed character, work consistently or harmoniously in all points.’

From such considerations it would seem to follow that a large tolerance of friction between Church and State ought to go along with a vigilant insistence on inherent rights; for while both the constitution of human nature, and the conditions of man's life in society, compel a certain overlapping of the secular and the spiritual, which must needs from time to time create difficult and embarrassing situations (so that in truth the man who will not be patient of difficulty in determining his duty must needs go out of the world), yet it remains the case that *both* the inevitably associated authorities are Divine and exclusive, and cannot therefore be sacrificed in any particular of their legitimate claims without moral fault. While, however, both Church and State claim obedience within their respective spheres by Divine Right, it is manifest that there is an order of obligation in their respective claims. When they conflict, the one must be preferred to the other. The language in which Christ postulated the problem implied this. For when the two claims are proposed as the claim of Caesar and the claim of God, it is apparent that no equality of obligation exists. One is supreme over the other. ‘*We must obey God rather than men.*’ There can be no question when the issue is clear: but circumstances may so obscure the issue that even brave and honest men

may find it hard to distinguish between the two claimants, which is Caesar and which is God. When, indeed, as in the Apostolic Age, the State was indifferent, or, as in the times before the conversion of Constantine, hostile, the problem of a Christian's civic duty might be difficult because of the cruel sacrifices which it might compel, but it could hardly be difficult because of its obscurity. The line of demarcation between his secular and his spiritual obligation could not be mistaken. The special complexity of the problem as it presents itself within Christendom arises from the circumstance that the State in this country still recognizes, at least nominally, that very authority of Christ over human life which the Church exists to assert and make effective. Over the High Altar of Westminster Abbey, Dean Stanley caused the words to be inscribed, '*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.*' That might be called the Idea of Establishment, and, so far as it is embodied in political institutions, it tends to obscure the frontiers and the claims of Church and State.

Thus far I have followed, almost textually, a passage in Dr. Hensley Henson's *Disestablishment* (1929), which he wrote in 1900. The use of the words 'Church' and 'State' now necessitate a brief digression.

The claim of the State in this country is, broadly speaking, the claim made by the Government on behalf of, and in conformity with, the demand of a bare majority, sometimes even of a minority, of voters, *i.e.* of adult persons. The same is true in varying measure elsewhere, for, whether in Germany or in Italy, in Poland or in Austria, or in half-a-dozen other totalitarian States, the Government in power is a popular Government enjoying popular support without which it could not endure, for none of these countries have, like us, a large and prosperous middle-class nor a mercenary (*i.e.* voluntary) army. Almost every claim made by the State is by virtue of a Statute passed or revised for the most part during our lifetime, and, in this country, ninety-nine persons out of a hundred who are interested in politics desire to extend the sphere of the State by fresh legislation involving compulsion in every direction upon the individual in the supposed interest of himself and his fellows. The hundredth person is always called a 'reactionary.'

The Churches, on the other hand, are of necessity and by their nature authoritarian to the extent that the hierarchy declare what is, or is not, compatible with the Christian religion and decline to accept a majority vote of their adherents on such matters, for example, as the right of a divorced person to re-marriage in a church, the right of a parson to withhold burial from an unbaptized person or one who died by his own hand. The right of excommunication is vested in authority and not in a popularly constituted tribunal. The possibilities of friction are latent in this and in other matters, such as compulsory or voluntary sterilization, birth control or euthanasia, the type of education administered compulsorily in State schools, the degree of latitude to be allowed in books written upon certain subjects and the obligation of military service. Upon all these matters ecclesiastical authorities speak with many voices, for Christian practice varies greatly in different countries and in successive decades, but all are authoritarian.

The Fascist and the National Socialist States differ greatly in internal organization from each other, but they are both based upon an attitude of fundamental opposition to the conception of government by groups of political leaders who control the machinery of the State and exercise it either alternately to the advantage of their respective supporters, or close their ranks, sink their differences, and divide the power among themselves, so that, in practice, the electorate cannot hope to replace them by others and ends by abstaining from the polls, with an unconscious feeling of frustration. That is not an unfair, though it is a purposely over-emphasized, picture of the existing party system in America, and it is not wholly inapplicable to ourselves.

National Socialism and Fascism are different forms of the reaction against the monopoly of political control by a small group of men backed by two or three party machines. Those who have attained power have done so by claiming to protect the masses from the politicians. Dictatorships are not inherent in either, but they are an inevitable preliminary. Against the management of affairs by rival groups of masters and men in particular industries, who are able to raise wages in that particular trade at the expense of society, the totalitarian States assert the right of society to control both. Against the conception of

territorial representation, the totalitarian State puts the conception of functional representation. Against the powerlessness of a democratic State in the presence of vested interests—which are strongly entrenched in all political parties and in Departments of State—the totalitarian State offers the slogan '*Gemeinnutz vor Eigennutz*.'

I am not a partisan of the totalitarian State: I suspect that the remedy will prove worse than the disease. 'Freedom,' says L. T. Hobhouse, 'is the most delicate of organisms but the source of robustness in all,' and, on balance, I prefer the artless irresponsibility of British Youth to the tutored purposefulness of Hitler Jugend and the Balillas. Dr. Lisle Burns says that

'as an ideal, democracy is the emotional conception of a community still to be created in which all men and women have an equal right to share in all the benefits of civilized life—security against violence and against arbitrary rule, adequate wealth and leisure, in order that each may have free play for whatever abilities he or she possesses.'

Yet those words represent almost precisely what Fascists and National Socialists desire with a passionate insistence which has led them in Germany, where for historical reasons Christians were deeply divided and took a very active part in politics, to override and to seek to overthrow everything which seemed to threaten or weaken national unity.

But National Socialists would qualify De Lisle Burn's ideal by adding that biological laws are ordained of God and cannot be ignored. They would find ample support in the Old Testament as well as in the results of scientific research and of the experience of mankind. They have given effect to their convictions crudely and cruelly by methods which I have condemned in public in Germany as well as in this country. Yet attention to the laws of biology, which are as fundamental as the laws of physics, is necessary to survival, and it is noteworthy that all totalitarian States pay great attention to them as underlying and fundamental to true religion and virtue.

But I would beg you to judge neither Russians nor Germans, Italians nor Spaniards, by what is done in time of stress or in moments of passion. A decade is a short period in the life of a nation. Tolerance does not imply suspension of judgment, still less does it imply indifference. What it implies and necessitates is an earnest attempt to compare the best in others with the best

in ourselves, and the defects of others with our own defects. No Frenchman or woman ever said '*tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*': what Madame de Stael wrote was '*tout comprendre rend très indulgent*,' and she was foremost in pleading to her countrymen for a right understanding of defeated Germany in 1812.

Fascists and National Socialists alike hold with Pareto in his *Sociologie Générale* that

'a religion cannot fight an economic theory, that belief without spiritual revelation is belief in an ideology, and that ideas must be transformed into passions in order to influence society.'

Such convictions accord ill with our English distrust of enthusiasm whether in religion or politics.

Christianity is based on the revelation of Jesus but incorporates, as any religion must, a number of ideologies—the outcome of human experience or, at least, the interpretation thereof. Are Fascism or National Socialism by their nature incompatible with Christianity? That is the question which we must ask ourselves to-day. My reply in each case is a decisive negative. The principles in each case can be equated with belief in the revelation of Jesus, but all depends upon the manner in which they are carried into effect.

'Fascism,' wrote Mr. J. S. Barnes in a book published recently,

'is determined to educate the new generation into one of believers in a Divine Providence, to make of the new generation one of heroes who know no fear because of their faith, who would exalt the spirit of sacrifice, gladly fly in the face of any danger run in a worthy cause, and welcome martyrdom with a smile. This is no exaggeration. This is the root of our Fascist revolution. God is to become once more the central principle of our conscious life.'

I know Mr. Barnes well enough to be convinced that he sincerely believes and tries to practise what he writes. And I have seen enough of Germany in the past four years to convince me that the driving power of the leaders, though often to our ideas misguided, is neither hate nor fear, but love of the nation and the soil and confidence in the future.

What then is the upshot of the matter? I suggest that it is that *no Christian man can consistently with his religion elevate a secular political system into a creed*. Socialism, Fascism, National Socialism, Liberalism, Conservatism, Distributism,

Republicanism, Monarchism, Democracy, Autocracy, and Autarky—all are capable of being used to promote the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth on lines consistent with what little we know—and it is but little—of the mind of Christ.

The unpardonable sin is Complacency in face of wrong, of misery, and of avoidable injustice, and I could wish that our political parties, and our newspapers, were one whit as ready to draw attention to such things in our midst as they are, by an ingenious and long-continued process of selection, to emphasize their existence in certain selected foreign states, to the exclusion of others.

Let us look to the good future of man with some faith in it, and some ability to comprehend current changes without letting our sense blind and bewilder us. The world spirit is a strong swimmer; storms and waves will not drown him.

There is a vigour, an unselfishness, and a sense of public duty in the totalitarian States, especially among the younger generation, which compels admiration and is animated by a spirit which augurs well for Europe.

Regnavit deus, irascentur populi.

CHRISTIANITY AND DEMOCRACY

By the Rev. H. G. MULLINER, M.A., Vicar of North Stainley, Ripon,
and Chancellor-designate of Truro Cathedral.

THE title set for this paper is 'Christianity and the English Democratic Movement.' At first sight this title suggests a historical essay. To offer you such an essay in the setting of this Conference would be tantamount to pronouncing a funeral oration on the English Democratic movement. This, I judge, would be untimely. For English Democracy is very much alive. Attacked from the right and from the left, its own friends sometimes half-hearted and perplexed, no other social faith has yet shewn serious signs of gaining the allegiance of our nation.

To discuss Christianity and democracy is to enter a most confusing scene of controversy. The protagonists are many, and, like other plain men, I find myself drawn now to this leader and now to that; at one time to the sturdy common sense of Lord Baldwin, at another to the incisive arguments of Mr. Strachey. Two writers to whom this paper is specially indebted are the Master of Balliol and Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr.¹ My subject is not only open to a cross-fire of controversy, but it is so vast that I can only dwell on a few points and omit many of importance. Before I say something of the Christian basis of democracy and something of democracy in England, I want to say a word about the Christian ethic of love.

I.

The central doctrine of Christianity is the Incarnation and its historic background is the prophetic faith. The prophets laid emphasis on the Transcendence and Holiness of God. 'Woe is me,' cries Isaiah, 'because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.'² With the greater sense

¹ Including his 'Moral Man and Immoral Society,' a brilliant study from which I have not quoted.

² *Isaiah* viii, 5.

of God came the deeper sense of sin. Later, when 'the Word was made flesh,' it was a word of love. In this belief in the revelation of the God of love is the ultimate optimism of Christianity. In the Gospel Jesus set forth the perfectionist ethic of love, the perfect fruit of the prophetic movement. There is little disagreement that if men fulfilled this ethic of love we should not be worried by social problems. But they do not. We stand condemned by it, both personally and socially. Not only do we fail to live up to our perceptions of this ethic of love, but when we do we find ourselves condemned by our own deeper insight into the meaning of love. 'All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.'³ And worse than this. On the human scene we find not only a lack of love but a positive spirit of aggressive egotism, an evil spirit at war with the spirit of love. It is in us all, a law of our members which wars against the law of our minds. Especially is this so in groups to which we transfer our egotism: we love our country only to become national egotists. In the conflicts of nations and classes, and sometimes of churches, the ethic of love seems to have but little influence; in such a conflict it is seen, if seen at all, only as a dream that need not cause shame. And even when, as individuals or as groups, we make some little progress towards fulfilling the ethic of love, the power of egotism is such that we become self-righteous, trusting in ourselves that we are righteous and despising others, banishing ourselves from the realm of God's love into the solitary confinement of our own souls. 'The conclusion most abhorrent to the modern mood,' writes Dr. Niebuhr in *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, 'is that the possibilities of evil grow with the possibilities of good.'⁴ Yet this truth should not surprise men in an age when they confront each other with their rival ideologies as once they did with their rival theologies, and where the science which is the glory of our civilization threatens to be our destruction. In the old myth Satan was an angel of light. It was the Pharisees whom our Lord opposed. *Corruptio optimi pessima* is an old saying. The depth and extension of sin, that is the pessimism of Christianity. It is also its realism.

From the conflict between good and evil, between love and egotism, there is no escape. That is not to say that in history

³ *Isaiah* lxiv, 6.

⁴ p. 108.

Christian men have not tried to escape, and Charles Kingsley warned us that religion might be an opiate before Marx ever used that term. Orthodoxy has always been tempted to a sacramental other-worldliness supported by a this-worldly pessimism which has in effect denied the Incarnation and issued in an escapist temper. Liberal theology also, where it has been marked by rationalism and mysticism, has missed the significance of the Incarnation, while losing its social effectiveness, not by a too deep pessimism, but by a superficial worldly optimism. Seen in its true believers, Christianity is not escapist; rather, as von Hügel said, it is 'essentially—centrally—a heroism.'⁵ Into this world Christ came. It is here and now that we work out a salvation made possible by the forgiveness of God.

Two important conclusions follow from such a general view as the one I have outlined. First, we shall not expect any alteration of social conditions to alter the fundamental character of human experience. But this is not to say that social conditions should not be altered; their reformation is implicit in an ethic of love. 'But whoso hath the world's goods and beholdeth his brother in need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and truth.'⁶ When in the light of these words of St. John we consider the life around us we are both convicted of sin and reminded of the practical character of our duty. It is tragic when Christianity is identified in the popular mind with the holding of services or the moral exhortations of the clergy. Its genius is practical.⁷ 'I was an hungred and ye gave me meat.'⁸ 'Faith without works is dead.'⁹ But when as sinful men we seek thus to be practical

⁵ Selected Letters, p. 328.

⁶ I John iii, 17-18.

⁷ Even Socialists, who start with a Marxist bias against religion, seem to be realizing this truth. Mr. Strachey in *The Left News* (May, 1937) states that 'perhaps a majority of religiously minded people in this country to-day . . . evidently regard religion as practically synonymous with altruism.' Mr. Strachey would agree that the question of belief is ultimately vital, but meanwhile, he writes, 'we who cannot believe must co-operate with those who can' in 'establishing a Socialist Society.' Mr. Strachey's impression of our fellow-Christians and his invitation are both worthy of notice.

⁸ Matt. xxv, 35.

⁹ James ii, 17.

in a sinful world we can only achieve approximations to the ethic of love. We all know that in personal life. 'In the field of collective behaviour,' Niebuhr observes,

'the force of egotistic passion is so strong that the only harmonies possible are those which manage to neutralize this force through balances of power, through mutual defences against its inordinate expression, and through techniques for harnessing its energy to social ends.'¹⁰

What is possible in history and in society is only a relative good.

There is, however, need to see clearly what are the approximations to the ethic of love at which at any given time the social life should aim. General principles can give some help, though no moral principles would seem to be absolute in practical life. Historically Christianity was much influenced in the formation of general social principles by Stoic natural law. There is a need for a statement of such principles derived more directly from the ethic of love. Does, for example, the law of love require the support of an unjust government as a dyke against chaos? What has it to say to revolution as a means of achieving a juster social order? How far is the conception of justice itself a true guide? How far does the law of love require an economic equality? I cannot do more here than call attention to the need for such a statement of social principles—of approximations to the ethic of love—which would guide us in our social duty.

II.

There are points at which the ideals of democracy approximate to the ethics of love. Indeed in aim Christianity and democracy are congenial, if not integral, to each other. To the Christian, man, however fallen, is made in the divine image. The originality of Christianity, as von Hügel argued,¹¹ does not lie so much in its single doctrines, or even in its teaching as a whole, as in its revelation of Personality. The world is to the Christian a vale of soul-making; the universe a society of souls in God. We agree with Walt Whitman: 'Of the progress of the souls of men and women along the grand roads of the universe, all other progress is the needed emblem and sustenance.'¹² In the teach-

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 150.

¹¹ *The Mystical Element in Religion*, p. 26.

¹² *The Song of the Open Road*.

ing of Jesus the emphasis is not on the body corporate either ecclesiastical or civil, but on the individual for whom God cares and who can repent and believe the Gospel. That is not to say the individual is to be isolated from his fellows. Far from it; to dwell in love with God and man is the expression of salvation. 'Now we know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.'¹³

With this emphasis on personality goes an emphasis on freedom. The salvation offered, the atonement made, is something the individual must freely accept. After all, herein lies a part of the appeal and meaning of the Cross. It is true that in the Gospels, paradoxically, love is commanded, but love cannot be coerced, even by God. If love is the ultimate, freedom is necessary. And therefore we must not think even of the grace of God as overruling freedom. Dr. Oman has well said of the grace of God: 'We are never for it mere subjects, and much less pawns in God's pre-determined game, but it deals with us as with children, not indeed as those that are free, but as those whom it can truly bless by helping them to attain freedom.'¹⁴ Elsewhere Dr. Oman writes that 'the essence of God's Rule is that it is not content with obedience except in the blessedness of moral independence,'¹⁵ and that 'this independence is the singular, the unique, quality of a person, and in relations between persons where, on either side, this is ignored the relation becomes less than personal.'¹⁶ Some Christian thinkers seem to forget this and to exalt obedience as the final virtue. A mystic desired to be to God what a man's hand is to himself. He desired less than, I believe, God desired of him. Gore is typical in his dictum: 'The only escape from such slavery (to our lower nature) is by surrender to the higher will of God.'¹⁷ In the inner belief of many God is ultimately thought of as a monarch whose will is to be obeyed. From this piety follows the emphasis on a revelation which gives laws to be obeyed, on the authoritarian Church or the infallible Book. Freedom is only regarded, on this common view, as a power of choice between good and evil; and the great-

¹³ *I John* iii, 14.

¹⁴ Oman, *Grace and Personality*, p. 71.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁷ C. Gore, *The Philosophy of the Good Life* (Everyman Ed.), p. 240.

est blessedness is not to be able to sin.¹⁸ Is not freedom more than this? Is it not to be linked to that creativity which marks human life? May I support this line of thought with some words of Berdyaev:

‘The most important thing for ethics is man’s real nature, the spirit in which he acts, the presence or absence in him of inner light, of beneficent creative energy. Ethics must be based on the conception of energy and not of the final end. It must therefore interpret freedom as the original source of action and inner creative energy and not as the power of fulfilling the law and realizing a set purpose.’¹⁹

The sense of God’s desire for man’s creativity in freedom is also to be found in a poem of Browning’s:

‘God’s all, man’s nought :
But also God whose pleasure brought
Man into being, stands away
As it were a handbreadth off, to give
Room for the newly made to live,
And look at him from a place apart,
And use his gifts of brain and heart,
Given indeed, but to keep for ever. . . .
Man therefore stands on his own stock
Of love and power, as a pin-point rock :
And, looking to God who ordained divorce
Of the rock from his boundless continent. . . .’²⁰

Perhaps the point I seek to emphasize in regard to freedom can be illustrated from our ordinary experience, where when we are in a position of command we do not, at our best, look in those under us for the spirit of slavish obedience, but we desire and admire a spirit of loyalty. Loyalty is more than obedience: it includes a deep rich freedom and a true independence. Dare we say that God desires of us not mere obedience but loyalty; the loyalty of those whom He has bidden, ‘Son of Man, stand upon thy feet’?²¹ Can we read this into the word of Christ, ‘No longer do I call you servants . . . but I have called you friends’?²² Did St. Paul mean less than this by ‘the glorious liberty of the children of God’?²³

¹⁸ cf. Augustine, ‘Posse non peccare, magna est libertas: non posse peccare, maxima est.’

¹⁹ *The Destiny of Man*, p. 103. My impression from his *Freedom and the Spirit* is that Eastern orthodox theology has preserved more emphasis on the divine element in man than has Western theology.

²⁰ ‘Christmas Eve.’

²¹ Ezekiel ii, 1.

²² John xv, 15.

²³ Romans viii, 21.

Now this emphasis in Christianity on personality and freedom finds its political counterpart in the idea of the democratic state, in which there is a like emphasis on personality and freedom. Democracy, as I understand it, does not rest on the facile and false faith that if the individual is left to himself all will be well in the best of all possible worlds, but rather that he ought to be left to himself to work out his own salvation. 'Really,' said Colonel Rainsboro to Cromwell, 'I think the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the richest he.' 'That,' comments Dr. A. D. Lindsay, 'seems to me to be the authentic note of democracy. The poorest has his own life *to live*, not to be managed or drilled or used by other people. His life is his and he has to live it. None can divest him of that responsibility.'²⁴ These words of Col. Rainsboro voice, I believe, a conviction which runs deeply in our English history, even though at different times different groups in our nation have been oppressed. We can see this conviction at work in the field of our English law, where, as Professor Dicey observed, 'with us individual rights are the basis, not the result, of the law of the constitution.'²⁵ But we must add, not least in these days when scientific skill has brought increase of wealth, that if the 'poorest he that is in England hath a life to live,' he needs the means of life.

Thus on the democratic view we contemplate in society the free activity of persons which will, *inter alia*, express itself in the forming of varied voluntary associations. These voluntary associations are a characteristic feature of democracy. The assumption on which democracy is based—and it is a large one—is that men can agree on common action which yet leaves each free to live his own life. The method of democracy for discovering this common action is debate, which, when it is successful, is discovering something which could be discovered by no other method. This debate is a continuous social adventure into the unknown. It is a search for the will of God. Only by such free public debate can the one-sidedness of the individual's view be eliminated and a principle of common action be discovered which each can feel does justice to what was vital in his own

²⁴ *The Essentials of Democracy*, p. 13.

²⁵ *The Law of the Constitution*, p. 203.

contention. In such a democracy the State is, from one point of view, only the all-inclusive association which expresses the common mind and on its authority issues the rules of the game. The State as the coercive body withers away, as it does in Marx's theory. In practice, in the sinful world the State and its coercive power is needed, in Bosanquet's phrase, to hinder the hindrances to the good life, to prevent that abuse of freedom which damages the freedom of others. Democratic theory, while looking for a society rich in voluntary associations, thus takes a minimal view of the State. The coercive power of the State is always regarded as an evil, though it may be the lesser evil. Its true policy is a maximum of freedom for all.

It is clear enough that the democratic way offers no guarantees of easy success; it depends on the goodwill of the individual, and it suffers in so far as individualism becomes egotism, and freedom becomes licence. If it lacks enough goodwill it becomes unworkable. Rousseau wrote: 'If there were a people of gods, its government would be democratic. So perfect a government is not suitable to men.'²⁶ Dr. Stanton Coit, in this year's Conway Lecture entitled 'The One Sure Foundation for Democracy,' has examined afresh the pre-requisites of democracy. For myself I would only say with St. Paul that 'where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty,'²⁷ and I would add, as I judge St. Paul would, and only there.

III.

If we pass from theories to facts, the question arises, 'Is England a democracy?' Mr. Strachey says it is a capitalist democracy.²⁸ This means presumably 'a country where men rule by reason of their wealth,' which is Aristotle's definition of an oligarchy.²⁹ But if we accept this term it remains true that the English oligarchy is deeply influenced by the democratic spirit. It has constantly widened its membership, it is very democratic amongst its own members, and has extended to the nation democratic institutions in the fields of law and, in some

²⁶ *Contract Social*, III, 4.

²⁷ *II Cor.* iii, 17.

²⁸ *The Theory and Practice of Socialism*, p. 137.

²⁹ *Politics*, III, 8.

measure, of politics. If Communists are allowed to argue as Mr. Strachey did in the *Spectator*,³⁰ that what we see in Russia is not Communism but only a stage towards it, we may be allowed to say that what we have in England is not the democracy of our dreams but only a partial realization of it. Such a partial democracy as we have has grown slowly in our history. If we look back to the Normans we see its principles being asserted within the narrow group of king and barons. If we move on to the Stuarts we see Parliament fighting for democratic principles, and this time a wider group is concerned. Throughout the struggle it is no doctrinaire theory which moves men, but the realistic English war cry, 'No taxation without representation.' Later, stimulated by events in France, as we are to-day by events in Russia, we widened the basis of representation, and another group came into the effective area of English democracy. I would observe in passing that it took Englishmen forty-three years from the revolution in France to make up their minds to this modest measure of reform. Such extensions of the area of effective democracy were not achieved without tension and sometimes conflict. To-day there is tension, for we are again extending the area of our effective democracy. We see the process going on on all sides, and it is within the power of all to help. And, despite Marx's dogma of the class war, there has probably never been a time when so many different groups within the nation had some say in the formation of the common mind.

If in our history the area of effective democracy has been enlarged in respect of numbers, it has also been enlarged in respect of the aspects of life which have been brought under the influence of the democratic spirit; and after all democracy is not so much a form of government as a mode of living the common life. Our democracy was first concerned with the achievement of equal justice and then with the development of representative institutions. Imperfect though our achievements are, we have some measure of legal and political democracy. The spirit of democracy has penetrated less into our economic life, which seen from below is rather autocratic, and from above somewhat anarchic. The ordinary man, while he is, so to speak, living in a democratic world when he goes to vote or to take part in public

³⁰ *Christianity and Communism*, p. 35.

life, also lives in an autocratic world when he goes to work. And the experience of the latter makes it hard for him to enter into the spirit of the former. This economic part of the common life has not yet been fully constitutionalized.

It might be argued that in theory the old *laissez faire* economics was not far from the democratic spirit, but in practice freedom was mightily abused to the hurt of others. However this may be, in the last fifty years we have seen the growth of Big Business. Big Business has been a great practical success, and on its method the totalitarian state has been built. It succeeded by a method of autocracy and by an ideal of efficiency which has not valued overmuch the freedom and dignity of the individual.

It has crushed out the small man, and my sympathy goes to Mr. Hilaire Belloc in this plea³¹ that the forces of the State, including taxation, should be used to re-establish the small man. I doubt, with him, whether the gains from large-scale production are always worth while when set against the opportunity for individuality and freedom which belong to the small man and the aesthetic value of his individual craftsmanship. Technical advances to-day, especially in the distribution of electrical power, make possible a partial reversion to small industry and business such as would give not a few men the sort of life for which their temperament fits them. It is also true that a large number of men with a little capital of their own does much to maintain the realities of freedom in a sinful world.

Yet Big Business has come to stay, and there are many—and I think Mr. Belloc overlooks the point—who find their best life in a large team. But if we are to have such large and powerful economic organizations they must be constitutionalized. When I speak of constitutionalizing business I am thinking of how in other parts of our common life—say in churches, universities, and elsewhere—men live together under some form of constitution which assigns to each their rights and duties and provides them with a way of common life. In business there seem to be three parties concerned: the consumers, the capitalists, and the producers. Left-wing thinkers usually exaggerate the power of a few capitalists and solve the problem by the simple expedient of giving the whole control to the State. It would be more

³¹ An Essay on the Restoration of Property.

in accord with our history if we found some way of bringing the parties together under a constitution which would assign to each his rights and duties, his contribution and his share, and if we left the State to act as an umpire and arbiter in their disputes. Doubtless it will be done only by a process of trial and error, and will not be achieved by any doctrinaire theory. Our characteristic English way is to agree on practical conventions which later harden into laws. For many years our legislation has been constitutionalizing certain aspects of our economic life. Our best business houses are working out methods of staff management which are marked by care for human well-being as well as for efficiency. Indeed, in the strikes and lock-outs, and in the experiments in profit-sharing and semi-public companies and Wages Tribunals, we are already engaged in the process of trial and error. I would only suggest in passing that the maintenance of human rights and dignities in industry is not less important than a fair deal in regard to the distribution of wealth.³²

IV.

In contenting myself with this general plea for the extension of our democracy in regard to numbers and to the aspects of life within its effective area, I shall open myself to the charge of underestimating the power of anti-democratic forces and the number of the reforms which are to be desired. A parson should not blind himself to the power of evil, but it is not his job to be an expert in economic and political reforms. There is a tendency to-day in some quarters to gather together, in the mind's eye, all the evils of our common life and to conclude that this bundle of sticks can only be broken by the axe of revolution. In the old fable the sticks were broken one by one, and I believe our best hope lies in each man following the platonic advice to 'mind his own business' and helping to break the stick of evil in that

³² In his second pamphlet on 'A New Conception of Business' Mr. Frank Murphy of radio fame made a statement which arose out of discussion with others. 'The fundamental trouble,' he wrote, 'with business, in my opinion, is that we do not possess what to me are our most precious civil liberties, namely, freedom of speech, right of defence and public trial, judges independent of the executive, and economic security so long as we are willing to work.'

part of the social field which is his own calling. To some, I doubt not, what I have said must seem to be hopelessly bourgeois. Am I not aware, I might be asked, that in modern England 23 per cent. of the income goes to 1½ per cent. of the people while more than five millions are below the poverty line? I am aware of these and other painful facts.³³ I make no pretence that we have reached the Promised Land, but when I am told that the solutions offered by the left or right will speedily take us across Jordan, I am sceptical. I fear they are short cuts which will only place us in a more unpleasant part of the wilderness.

Fascism, if I have rightly understood it through an essay of Karl Polyani,³⁴ is *au fond* anti-individualist. It sees individualism as the root of error leading through democracy and liberalism to bolshevism. It aspires after some sort of society which is not a relationship of persons. Whether English Fascists really understand Professor Spann's ideas—which I do not—or agree with them, I do not know, but popular German speakers seem to have caught the spirit and to be able to put it across. Dr. Ley, leader of the German Labour Front and the 'Strength through Joy' organization, in a broadcast address from Cologne last June, told a vast audience :

'Since Adolf Hitler came to power the only private life which remains is at night when you are asleep. Beyond this there is none. You are soldiers of Adolf Hitler as soon as you awake, when you go to work, and during your contacts with other people. Anyone who does not keep pace with us will be kicked in the heels until he does.'³⁵

Since these words were spoken modern art and the Confessional Church have been 'kicked in the heels.'

The Fascists are perhaps quite right and Communism is in theory the heir of Liberalism, only anxious, as I am myself, to extend into the economic sphere what has been gained for human freedom in the spheres of law and politics. But in practice doubts arise. According to the orthodoxy of Marx, the State—the bad coercive power—would 'wither away.' Meanwhile Mr. Stalin has constructed the most arbitrary and powerful State machine yet known to history, and has confessed that the

³³ *Vide* Fabian Tract No. 5.

³⁴ In 'Christianity and the Social Revolution.'

³⁵ *The Yorkshire Post*, 26th June, 1937.

transitional period before the State disappears may be 'a whole historical epoch.' As the formula of the Party Congress declared: 'The highest possible development of the power of the State with the object of preparing the conditions for the dying out of the State.'³⁶ Or, as *The Times* correspondent comments in his caustic manner, 'The highest possible development of the State is the practice, the dying out of the State is the theory.' Meanwhile a new oligarchy runs the Russian State, and we may well observe, in Mr. Stalin's words to Mr. H. G. Wells, 'Obsolete classes don't voluntarily disappear.' Why should his own oligarchy be an exception to his own general rule? Thus while the Communists await their parousia and practise an inter-imsethic until their kingdom comes, not from God, but from out of the heart of man set free from the shackles of capitalism, we may be allowed to doubt whether Socialist rule is any more friendly to individualism than the Fascist.

Of course we all know that there is a new Russian Constitution. It has been baptized in blood. Yet I do not regard it as mere propaganda. I suspect the Russians, like ourselves, are capable of a divided mind, half accepting the ideal of democracy and half accepting the idea of a servile state. The root of the trouble lies in the conception of man. Communism, like Fascism, is a variant of the godless humanism not unknown in our own midst. This humanism started at the Renaissance in a burst of creative energy and splendidly defended human dignity and freedom against the influence of a too authoritarian Church. It is ending by making human life cheap. As Barry wrote, 'It has set Man on the world's vacant throne: but it can no longer worship its idol.'³⁷ In its latest—scientific—phase it has accepted too wholeheartedly the scientific method, and it has consequently been haunted by the idea of 'the scientific man,' a child of Hobbes and Adam Smith, of Darwin and Freud. This 'scientific man,'³⁸ as he has reached popular imagination, is a creature of forces: forces create him in the womb and govern him from

³⁶ *The Times*, 26th May, 1937.

³⁷ F. R. Barry, 'The Relevance of Christianity,' p. 126.

³⁸ *Vide* Dr. Lindsay's discussion of 'the radical equalitarianism which is the real opponent of an individualism based on religious experience.'—'The Essential of Democracy,' p. 2.

birth to death. He is a slave of physical and psychological forces and a fit member of a servile state. In private life this scientific humanism produces fatalism; 'you can't change human nature.' In public life it sets no limit to the ambition of those who have the greater force and power. If they dislike the pattern of a man's life, why should they not scrap him and try again for a better type by breeding and education and propaganda?

To such a popular and scientific humanism, Christianity opposes an older and profounder view of man, at once more optimistic (for man is a child of God, made in the divine image, responsible for his life) and more pessimistic (for he is a fallen child and sin dwells in him). From within, as Dr. Niebuhr puts it, 'when life is seen in its total dimension the sense of God and the sense of sin are involved in the same act of self-consciousness.'³⁹ But we shall not be content, least of all in this Conference, to oppose to a man-destroying humanism only the older insights of religion. We have sensed in this whole movement of humanism some contribution to the religion of men and some measure of revelation. The trouble, as I see it, of Christian humanism has been a tendency to be an aspect of culture rather than a religion. It has emphasized the movement of man to God rather than the movement of God to man. Religious humanism ever since the Renaissance has believed in freedom as against ecclesiastical authority; godless humanism has asserted man's freedom against all the powers of heaven. Here is evil, but it perverts a truth. Von Hügel used to emphasize again and again our creatureliness. And he was right to do so. Yet it is also true that under God's providence man has a creative power and is in his measure a creator. And 'God stands away as it were a handbreadth off to give room for the newly-made to live.' In our piety and in our theology we need to lay hold both on our creatureliness and on our creative freedom. Freedom to-day has become a poor word. We know how freedom can be abused and become a cloak of malice. If, as de Maistre said, every country has the government it deserves, we may say bitterly and with fear for ourselves that men enslaved to passions deserve the tutorship of a dictator. But freedom meant much to our forefathers; they laid down their lives for it. And, though it

³⁹ *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, p. 77.

was for this or that particular freedom that they died, there was surely some deeper intuition of God which gave them power to die. Our divine image, our sin, our creative freedom, these are all part of a Christian doctrine of man. There is, as I see it, no guarantee in this adventurous world that the Christian view of man will prevail in *our* civilization, but on the nature of our belief about man will depend the character of the social order we create.

THE FUNDAMENTALIST SOLUTION

By the Rev. LAURENCE E. BROWNE, D.D.

MY task to-day is not to convert you from the errors of Fundamentalism. I do not think that many of you stand in danger in that direction. Nor shall I attempt to convert you to Fundamentalism, for two reasons; first, that I do not think I should have much success, and secondly, that even for the purposes of debate I could not stand up and present Fundamentalism as my own conviction.

I am aware that the subject before the Conference is the religious crisis, and that you are at the moment only interested in Fundamentalism in so far as it offers a solution to the problems of the present day. But I think you will agree that what will meet the problems of to-day is the truth, and my task therefore resolves itself into finding out what is the truth in Fundamentalism.

There are two questions I might profitably ask, (1) why we are not Fundamentalists, and (2) why many other Christians are. The second is more important, as I venture to think that most of us are well aware why we do not hold these strange views, but haven't the ghost of an idea why anybody does. I am not going to divide my paper into two parts, but I want you to realize that I am trying to answer these two questions, and that the second is the more important. There are Fundamentalists who are our fellow-workers in the Kingdom of God. I have met many of them as most zealous workers in the mission field. It is most important we should understand what lies at the back of the minds of these fellow-disciples of our Lord.

Fundamentalism is the school of thought that takes Holy Scripture as the sole or main basis of faith, and therefore accepts it throughout as infallible. The degree of infallibility attributed to Holy Scripture varies. Generally speaking it includes the truth of every statement of religion or morals, the accuracy of every historical and scientific statement, the authorship of every book by the man whose name it bears, and the literal fulfilment

of every prophecy. Perhaps the best known example of Fundamentalism is the rejection of the theory of Evolution because it conflicts with the first chapter of Genesis. An extreme instance occurred about 1926 when a pastor was ejected from the ministry of the Gereformeerde Kerk of Holland because he refused to take literally the serpent in the Garden of Eden.

The most extreme Fundamentalism of all is found in Islam. According to the orthodox view, the whole Qur'an in the Arabic language is uncreated and existed from all time with God as the uncreated Word. Not merely the thoughts, but the very form of the Arabic letters, is uncreated and eternal. These views are still held by some authorities at the present day, though opinion is divided about whether the Qur'an is created or uncreated. The Qur'an is thus as far as it goes an absolutely infallible basis for faith and practice; but as it does not cover the whole field, other bases are also accepted, *viz.* the *Hadith* or Traditions of Muhammad, Analogy from the Qur'an and *Hadith*, and *Ijma'* or agreement of all Muslims.

Just as Muslims do not make the Qur'an the sole basis of faith, so even Christian Fundamentalists admit other bases, such as the inspiration of the individual, though laying the chief stress on the witness of the Bible. It may be as well here to remind you that Low Church means assigning a low value to the corporate witness of the Church as a basis for faith, and High Church means assigning a high value to the corporate witness of the Church.

It will be seen at once that belief in Fundamentalism is connected with the doctrine of God. If I were to say that the six days of creation were contrary to the researches of geologists, the order of creation in *Gen.* i and ii was contrary to Biology, the story of the Tower of Babel was contrary to Philology, the age of Methuselah was contrary to Anthropology, the standing still of the sun and moon was contrary to Astronomy, and our Lord's walking on the water was contrary to Physics, the Fundamentalist would simply reply that God had revealed these facts in His book, and that the conclusions of Science must be tested by the standard of the written divine word. If I were to say that there was a contradiction in the two statements that God moved David to number Israel and Judah (II *Sam.* xxiv, 1) and that

Satan moved David to number Israel (I *Chr.* xxi, 1), the Fundamentalist would reply that both statements were true because God had caused them to be written, and that it was my ignorance which made it impossible for me to reconcile them. It follows immediately that great doubt is thrown on the validity of human reason, and it would almost seem as if God had given us what appeared to be the talent of reason but was in reality a temptation to unbelief. There is thus attributed to God arbitrary action, which to human view appears absurd and unreasonable. One early opponent of Darwinism actually suggested that God had put the fossils in the ground to test people. There is in the Qur'an (Sura 18, al-Kahf) a series of three incidents related of Moses and Khidr with the express purpose of showing that God's ways are inscrutable and we must not question them. Muhammadanism has developed to an extraordinary degree the notion of God's almightiness and freedom from constraint by any moral law. Allah's actions cannot be called in question by human reason. Thus the doctrine of the infallible Qur'an is in conformity with the Muslim doctrine of God. It would probably be true to say that the extremer forms of the verbal inspiration theory among Christians have developed under the influence of Calvinism, which, like Islam, over-emphasized the arbitrary almightiness of God.

The older type of missionaries to Muslims used to go with a Bible in their hands and offer it to their hearers instead of the Qur'an, and then proceed to prove the truth of Christianity from the Bible. Now there is no doubt that many people are led to Christ by reading the Gospels, and many enquirers and even converts are brought in by the agency of a Scripture portion purchased from a colporteur who was too uneducated to give more than the simplest explanation of his wares. But at the same time a definite error is being taught if Muslims are asked to put the Bible in the place they had formerly given to the Qur'an. The Bible is not the Word of God, but contains the testimony to Jesus the Word of God. The Bible, like the Qur'an, is an object, a created thing. Christ is a living person, so that eventually the testimony is within us, and consequently has a nearness and a validity that cannot be found in an external object. It may be that in some instances Fundamentalist missionaries may gain

adherents from Islam more readily than missionaries of a more critical outlook, but only at the expense of trouble to come. I fear that the more modern-minded missionaries who are now working in Central Java will find great internal difficulties when the converts won to Christian Fundamentalism by the Gereformeerde Kerk are brought into contact with modern scientific knowledge.

I can give you an example from history of the effects upon Muslims of faulty presentation of the testimony to our Lord Jesus Christ. In the early days of Islam two chief arguments were offered by Christians for their faith. The first argument pointed to the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah fulfilled in Jesus, and the second pointed to His miracles. I shall come presently to the real value of prophecies and miracles; but for the moment all I say is that prophecies and miracles are not evidence of the divinity of Christ. The evidence for what He is is to be found in His life and character; and the emphasis on the external evidence of prophecies and miracles only served to draw attention away from His unique personality. Moreover, if external testimony was all that was required, it could easily be supplied, and was supplied in Islam. Very few Muslims of the present day have had a sufficiently critical education to be able to distinguish between the Biblical prophecies and miracles and those that were deliberately fabricated concerning Muhammad in order to place him on the same level as Jesus. The mythical Muhammad, revered by all the Muslims of the world to-day, the perfect man, witnessed to by prophecies from the Old Testament and the New Testament, proved to be God's Apostle by the miracles he wrought, was an invention of pious Muslims, an invention fostered by the erroneous Christian presentation of Christ. Muslims could never have made him a copy of the real Jesus who came not to be ministered unto but to minister and gave His life a ransom for many.

From what I have already said you will have realized that the error of Fundamentalism arises from an over-emphasis on the almightiness of God. But how, you may say, can a truth about God be over-emphasized? The answer is that God is not almighty, if almighty means He can do anything. There is an incorrect change of meaning as you pass from Yahweh Sabaoth

through θεός παντοκράτωρ to *deus omnipotens* and God almighty. Actually the truth has often been saved, in spite of the faulty language, by the knowledge that God is also holy and loving.

But now, correcting our language, let us assert that God is the ruler of all things, the ordainer and planner of the universe and its history. I think we shall then find ourselves emphasizing some of the same elements which Fundamentalists emphasize. This will take some time to explain, and I will start with the difficult subject of prophecy. When the author of the First Gospel saw a mention (as he thought) of two donkeys, a mother and her foal, in Zechariah, he thought it was a prophecy which was fulfilled by Jesus riding on two asses in the triumphal entry to Jerusalem. When St. Paul meditated on the term 'seed of Abraham,' he saw a significance in the singular word 'seed' as referring prophetically to one descendant of Abraham, *viz.* the Messiah. With that sort of prophecy we can nowadays feel no sympathy. It is at best a somewhat fantastic play on words. On the other hand we readily agree that prophecy is made and fulfilled when Christ showed the ideal character which seers of old had groped after, *e.g.* His kingship, His reign of peace, His service of suffering. We readily agree that the prophecy from Trito-Isaiah which our Lord read in the synagogue was fulfilled as He said, and that Peter was right on the day of Pentecost in claiming that Joel's prophecy of the convulsion of the universe with the outpouring of the Spirit was fulfilled. What we notice about prophecies such as these is that they could not possibly be used to prove anything. But they do fit into a scheme of things in which God was ordering the events of the world and the thoughts of men in such a way as to prepare for the coming of the Son of God. Having got so far, let us take some of the harder prophecies, and see if we can understand them in the same light. 'In order that the Scripture might be accomplished He said, I thirst.' That is a very informative verse. We all know that Jesus cried 'I thirst' because He was thirsty. How then could the evangelist have used the word *ἵνα* 'in order that'? It would make it mere play-acting to say that Jesus uttered the cry because He wanted to fulfil a prophecy. No, the purpose expressed in the word *ἵνα* is the age-long purpose of God who so ordered things that the picture of the sinless sufferer

of Ps. xxii, whose tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, was fulfilled in Jesus. The Fourth Gospel, after relating the fact that Jesus' side was pierced with a sword, but His legs were not broken, said that these things were done 'in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken.' Again there is that curious word *ἵνα* 'in order that.' Certainly there was no intention on the part of the soldiers to fulfil a prophecy. The evangelist could only mean that God in His planning of history had so arranged that a detail of the death of Christ should correspond with a detail of the sacrifice of the passover lamb. I think the evangelist might have added that the death of Christ was so ordained that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, 'Your lamb shall be without blemish.' Again you will see at once that here is no prophecy which could be used as evidence of anything. If prophecy could be used in that way you might ask why Jesus was not crucified when He was at the age of one year to fulfil the prophecy implied in the direction that the lamb must be one year old. What we have rather is a certain resemblance in some details, which might be called mere coincidences, or which might be regarded as the working of the one divine mind which controls history. That such resemblances may not be entirely fortuitous is suggested by the study of Biology. You notice that there is a resemblance between the skeleton of a bird's wing and that of a mammal's foreleg. You know that the reason is that in the course of ages the two have evolved from a common ancestor. Sometimes in a popular lecture I put the same thing more simply by saying that the bird's wing and the mammal's foreleg have come from the same workshop. I do not think that I should be wrong in putting it in yet another way, and saying that the same divine mind that planned the one planned the other. When therefore the evangelist or a pious commentator finds in some details of Old Testament language 'types' of our Lord, it cannot be dismissed as a mere fantasy: it is what we should expect if there is one divine mind controlling history. Of course one could go further, and I think we must go further, in this search for 'types.' Not in the Old Testament only, but in every religion, even the most primitive, there are elements to be found suggestive of what we find in Christianity. There is in most cases no actual evolutionary con-

nexion between them. There may be no historical connexion between, say, a sacrificial feast of primitive savages, in which they eat the totem animal, and the Christian Eucharist. But both come from the same workshop, for both have arisen from the same conditions, *viz.* God on the one hand, human beings on the other hand, and God trying to bring the men into relation with Himself. The comparative study of religions concerns itself with such similarities in different religions as may have an historical connexion with one another. If, however, we are thinking of all religions as having come into existence by the interaction of the divine spirit with the soul of man, we may well see significance in similarities which have no historical connexion.

From these considerations it will appear that the exact wording of the Old Testament is of great importance. I will not say that it is verbally inspired, because that means nothing until you have defined the word 'inspired.' I will not say that it is 'true,' until I have defined what I mean by true. For instance, take the first chapter of Genesis. Historically and scientifically it is about as untrue as it could possibly be. Even Origen 1,700 years ago saw that it was untrue to speak of the creation of light before the creation of the sun, and any schoolboy can tell you that plants and animals originated simultaneously. That man was created in the image of God is one of the greatest truths that was ever penned, far exceeding the measure of truth in the doctrine of the Upanishads that the soul of man is identical with the divine soul. It is also wonderfully true that all God's creation is very good—but only when you look at its latter end. It is absolutely untrue that God ever rested from His creative work, but it is true historically that the Jews after the Exile when P (the priestly writers' portion in the Hexateuch) was composed thought He had rested and was no longer engaged in creative work. It was this limitation of their conception of God's present activities which enabled the Sadducees at a later time to push God further away till they thought of Him as not actively interfering in the affairs of men. I hesitate therefore to say that the Old Testament is verbally inspired or true, until I have defined my terms. But I do say that if one jot or tittle of the Old Testament were different from what it is, it would be less true. If for instance the letter *nun* in the name of Manasseh in *Judg.* xviii, 30, was not hanging

in the air, as it is in our Hebrew Bibles, we should lose the true fact that some people claimed not Manasseh but Moses as the ancestor of the priesthood at Dan. It is probably true that Samuel hewed Agag in pieces. It is true that in doing so he taught a higher obedience than Saul knew. No doubt Samuel's action was cruel and unchristian, but that only witnesses to the truth that Christian morality was unknown. God never commanded Abraham to slay his firstborn son. If the story were historical, and if Abraham had been a Christian, he would have replied, 'You are the Devil and not God.' But the Jews, who told the story, truly reflected the knowledge they had of God as one who demanded obedience, and truly reflected the ignorance they had of His morality. If the stories of Abraham, of Samson, and of Samuel had been differently told they would have been untrue to the great fact of God's gradual revelation of Himself. There is a sense in which I should be quite prepared to say that the Old Testament was verbally inspired to be written just as it was. If you reply, 'Yes, but your verbal inspiration is quite unlike the verbal inspiration of the Fundamentalists,' I should agree. But still I think I have got hold of the truth that lies behind what Fundamentalism stands for.

Now let us turn to miracles. I do not think there is much to choose between the ignorant credulity of those who believe literally in every miracle recorded in the Bible, and the scientific pride of those who say that miracles never happen. Miracles are departures from our common experience. The pure physicist, who properly took no account of anything outside the realm of physics, would have to admit that he could not explain the rise of sap in trees, because osmosis alone is not a sufficient explanation, and new laws come into operation in a living organism which are unknown to physics. If he saw all the mail-carrying aeroplanes of the country being converted into bombers because of a wave of nationalist fervour stirring in the minds of the people, he would have to confess that something was happening of which physics could not take cognisance. It is absurd for any scientist, speaking solely as a scientist, to say that miracles do not happen. Our judgment on the Bible miracles must be made, first upon the ordinary criteria of historical probability, and then most crucially on the character that we attribute to God; and no

one is capable of expressing this latter judgment unless he has lived where spiritual forces are at work. The historical evidence that Elijah was fed by ravens is not strong, and therefore I hesitate to believe it. But I know personally a Christian convert from Islam who was saved at a critical moment of his life from starvation or a return to Islam by food dropped in front of him by a crow or kite. The mission field, even in my small experience, provides so many cases of visions in connexion with conversion, and spiritual guidance to particular courses of action, that I can have no patience with anyone who on *a priori* grounds would deny the visions of Peter on the house-top, Paul on the way to Damascus, Ananias at Damascus, or Paul's guidance to avoid Bithynia and pass on to Troas. These things, amazing as they may be, are in full accord with what we know of the fatherly character of God. As in the case of prophecy, miracles are not evidence of our Lord's divinity. They are at most a warning to us of our ignorance, and examples of the unbounded love of God. Of the greatest of all miracles, the bodily resurrection of our Lord, we naturally cannot expect to find the confirmatory evidence of similar occurrences. But of those who wish to deny it I would ask whether they have given full weight, first to the historical evidence of the New Testament, and secondly to the expansion of the Christian Church which followed. Then I would ask them whether they really know enough about human nature, about the composition of matter and its relation to electricity and ether, and its relation to spirit, to say on *a priori* grounds that it is impossible. A Fundamentalist comes to me and says, 'It is proved by the New Testament that Jesus rose from the dead with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature. It is supported by the hopes of psalmists and prophets, and by the converted lives of Christians, and I believe it.' He may be quite ignorant of criticism and of the philosophical difficulties of his belief. But yet I think he is nearer the truth than the critic who struggles desperately to face the philosophical difficulties and regretfully decides that he must deny the resurrection of Christ. For I think that the Fundamentalist, with all his intellectual failings, has often a stronger sense than the rest of us of God's overruling of the world and His intimate dealings with each one of us. The historical critic, who is the real op-

ponent of Fundamentalism, is perfectly right in saying that the truth of miracles must be tested by the evidence for them. One only gives this warning to the critic that he should take into account the whole evidence, and that he should be prepared for events to have happened when great spiritual forces were at work which do not occur under more ordinary circumstances. It is here that the evidence of events happening to-day in the mission field is so valuable for the historical critic of the New Testament.

You have not had a Fundamentalist speaking to you this morning, and consequently no defence of the Fundamentalist position. I very much doubt if anyone who has had a thorough training in historical or scientific method could be a Fundamentalist, for their assertions involve the denial of the validity of human reason. For all that, there is at the back of their minds true religion, a true sense of utter dependence upon God, and a zealous devotion to His service, which is worthy of all praise and of our emulation.

THE ROMANIST SOLUTION

By the REV. A. R. VIDLER, author of *The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church*, *The Development of Modern Catholicism*, etc., etc.

I.

HEILER, in his great book *Der Katholizismus*, says that in the Roman Church there are combined seven quite different types of religion, which may be denominated as follows: primitive folk-piety, ethical and ceremonial legalism, political ecclesiasticism, theological rationalism, mystery cultus, evangelical perfectionism, and sublime mysticism. It is only the external organization of Roman Catholicism and its official theological systematization that offer the appearance of simplicity and uniformity, and so deceive the superficial observer; if we look at the living concrete reality beneath, we find a vast and bewildering *complexio oppositorum*, a combination of logically incompatible elements. Moreover, it is only in an abstract analysis that the different religious elements in Roman Catholicism can be separated from one another and isolated; in actual fact they are inextricably woven together.

It is this circumstance which makes every simplifying generalization and every sweeping statement about Roman Catholicism hazardous, that is, if it is intended to be true and just. The controversialist, whose primary aim is not the patient pursuit of truth and justice, but the rapid scoring of points and the summing up of all things in a series of general anathemas and devastating denunciations, finds in Roman Catholicism a happy hunting ground, for, just because of its wealth and complexity of content, it has plenty of features that invite adverse criticism. But the controversialist, who confines his attention to some of these, and ignores the positive virtues and merits which would not be less evident if he were interested in looking for them, will be sinning against the light, although he will doubtless win the gratifying applause of those who share his prejudices.

The American widow, who subsequently married Père

Hyacinthe Loyson, once observed that 'in the Catholic Church there is everything that is true and everything that is false, while in the Protestant Church there is much truth and little error.' No one would wish to take the epigram *au pied de la lettre*; but it suggests the point that for a Christian to reject or to attack Roman Catholicism *en bloc* would be suicidal; he would be rejecting his own profoundest convictions, since incorporated in Roman Catholicism are the fundamental Christian beliefs—in God Who is the Father of all, in Christ Who is the Saviour of the world, in the Holy Spirit Who is the source of light for the conscience and strength for the will, and in the Church which is the society of the redeemed. It is true that these beliefs appear to be attended by others by which they are compromised, if not contradicted; but this only shows the need for discrimination and for the careful qualification of any judgment that is expressed. The Church of Rome has, perhaps, no better friends than those who make intemperate and unqualified attacks upon it, for its apologists, by exposing the injustice of such attacks, are enabled to give the impression that all the opposition that they have to encounter is equally inspired by fanaticism or ignorance.

I want, therefore, to acknowledge at the outset that from one point of view the Roman Catholic solution of the present, indeed of the permanent, religious crisis of the world is that of historic Christianity, the solution, that is, upon which Christians as a whole are agreed in opposition to materialists, or humanists, or the devotees of other religions or pseudo-religions. So far as numbers are concerned, and in some other respects as well, the Church of Rome is the most impressive witness to the basic convictions which unite all who own Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. This, I suppose, was the justification for Fr. Tyrrell's remark that, if Rome dies, the other Churches may order their coffins.

It is not, however, on this aspect of the matter that I am invited to address you. It is not my business here to consider and discuss the Christian answer to the present and permanent problem of religion, but only the special and peculiar characteristics which under existing conditions differentiate the Romanist position from that of Christianity in general and from that of other parts of Christ's Church.

There are three such characteristics which I propose to notice, because they are characteristics that Romanist propaganda prominently emphasises, and at the same time that we ourselves must regard as chiefly objectionable: first, there is Rome's attitude to the unity of the Church; secondly, its doctrinal intransigence; and thirdly, its papal authoritarianism. In each case, I shall first consider the nature of the Romanist claim, and then proceed to criticize it.

II.

First, then, there is Rome's attitude to the unity of the Church. The grave obstacles to the preaching of the Gospel and to the commending of the Christian message, which are occasioned by the existence of schism and disunion among Christians, are now widely recognized, less widely perhaps in England, where familiarity has to some extent blunted their force, than in other parts of the world. There is no need to dwell on the seriousness of this; all responsible and large-minded Christians acknowledge the desirability, in theory at least, of a reunited Church. And, if Rome had, as it claims to have, the proper solution of this problem, that would be a matter of singular concern to us all.

The peculiarity of the Romanist attitude is a stringent denial that Christ's Church is, or can be, organically divided. It is maintained that the external unity of the Church is of such vital necessity that the Saviour Himself, when founding it, took infallible steps to provide that its unity never should be broken. Chief among these were the appointment of St. Peter and his successors as heads of the Church on earth, and the consequent arrangement that only those who are in communion with the bishop of Rome are members of the Church. It is held that the omniscience of the divine founder of the Church enabled Him during His incarnate life to foresee how in centuries to come its unity would be threatened, and that for this reason He provided a sovereign safeguard against such a calamity. On this view the only way, in which the unity of the Church can be re-established, is by the submission of all professing Christians, who are now in schism, to the bishop of Rome on whatever terms he requires. That this view has a certain simplicity and logical consistency,

which make it seem plausible to those who are already disposed to accept it, may be admitted. But, as Professor Whitehead has said, 'so far as concerns religious problems, simple solutions are bogus solutions.' This is a warning which Roman Catholic propagandists, and many other people too, would do well to bear in mind.

In the present case there are decisive objections to the Romanist solution, of which I can mention only two. First, the historical assumptions on which it is based not only are incapable of demonstration—that goes without saying, since no historical propositions can be demonstrated—but from the standpoint of those who require historical evidence for historical propositions are so improbable and precarious that they afford no sufficient premise for the definitive and drastic conclusion that is deduced from them. In the light of historical criticism it is, to say the least, a debatable question whether our Lord during His incarnate life explicitly founded an ecclesiastical institution which He intended to endure for centuries to come. *A fortiori* it is doubtful whether He took steps to provide for its external organization. It is a mistake to say that it is certain that He did not do so, for nothing can be proved with certainty in such matters, least of all a negative proposition. What can be said is that the available historical evidence fails to justify the specifically Romanist claims about the foundation of the Church; the only way in which they might have been recast in an historically respectable form was officially rejected by the Vatican, when the modernist movement was suppressed.

The Romanist theory is not in fact derived from historical evidence, but is imposed upon it on the ground of dogmatic speculations. Take, for instance, the assumption that the incarnate Lord was omniscient. That is a proposition to which I cannot myself attach an intelligible meaning, or regard as a suitable premise for logical deduction; the concept of omniscience is both negative and incomprehensible, and is applicable to no historical figure, but only to transcendent Deity. But, if we were to grant the common idea that omniscience means knowledge of every event past, present, and future, then only if we were ourselves omniscient should we be in a position to say whether anyone else was. The evidence that is available, not to

mention inherent probability, goes to show that the knowledge of the incarnate Lord was subject to the inevitable limitations which condition human nature. The line of argument on which Rome depends is not unlike, though it is less patently extravagant than, that of the seventeenth-century Viennese Jesuit, who maintained that Jesus spoke Latin on the ground that the Lord cannot have used any other language upon earth, since this is the language of the saints in heaven !

But not only are the historical assumptions on which the Romanist theory is based unwarranted ; we must, in the second place, object that the claim that the Church of Rome is exclusively the authentic Church of Christ, so that all other Christian bodies are no parts of the Church at all, is a claim that is not borne out, but rather is contradicted, by the obvious pragmatic test : ' By their fruits ye shall know them.' If the Church of Rome had the right to be regarded as the only Church of Christ so that no other Christian body were part of the Church at all, then we should be entitled to expect not indeed that it would exhibit perfection in its teaching and practice, in its corporate life and in its individual members, but at least that it would exhibit in those respects such a clear degree of moral superiority as would be compatible with the magnitude and exclusiveness of its claims.

Because we can see the fruits of the Spirit of Christ as clearly in the history and present life of our own Church and of other Christian Churches as in the Church of Rome (though, God knows, they are none too plentiful in any Church), we cannot but regard the claim of the latter as arrogant and unjustified. Earnestly as we may desire a reunited Church, and willing as we may be to make any honourable sacrifices in order that it may come about, we can never admit the justification of claims which both our intelligence and our conscience tell us are unfounded.

We would say to our Roman Catholic friends that it is not by a refusal even to join in corporate prayer with other Christians that the unity of the Church will be forwarded, but first of all by a recognition that, deplorable as schism is, there are circumstances in which it may rightly have been chosen as the lesser of two evils, that the real schismatics have often been those whose conduct has driven others into schism, and that in the

propagation of the Gospel and in the ministry of the word and sacraments God has manifestly blessed all the sundered parts of His Church, great as have been the sins and the failures and the defects of each.

III.

The second feature of official Roman Catholicism, that I propose to notice, is its peculiar and characteristic attitude to Christian doctrine. Romanist propaganda claims that the Church of Rome, in contrast to other Christian bodies, has preserved the Christian revelation in its integrity with unchanging fidelity. It is maintained that, while elsewhere the Christian faith has been adulterated or perverted, if not abandoned, Rome alone has held it with immutable orthodoxy. Other Christian bodies are represented as exhibiting a chaos of conflicting and changing opinions, but Rome with rock-like and consistent stability keeps the essential Christian truths and like a watch-dog wards off every heresy that arises.

Here too the Romanist claim has an apparent simplicity and plausibility, which recommend it to those who have neither the aptitude nor the inclination to cross-examine it. As long as its advocates keep on the attack, their case seems somewhat impressive. They point to the incompatible beliefs which are held by Christian bodies that are separated from Rome. Obviously these beliefs cannot all be true, since they contradict each other. It is easy, though of course unreasonable, to infer that none are true. And it is easy to score points by exposing the different and mutually inconsistent teachings that have been propounded by liberal or critical or (as Roman Catholics like to call them) rationalist theologians. No doubt critical theologians have propounded mistaken and arbitrary dogmas, and incidentally have defended them, as Schweitzer says, with a tenacity beyond that of the Church itself. But the fallibility of non-Roman theologians in no way implies the infallibility of the Pope.

The weakness of the Romanist doctrinal claim appears more clearly, however, when it is put on the defence. Here I do not only allude to the circumstance that the papacy both authorizes and enforces particular beliefs, such as belief in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, long after they have been recog-

nized as erroneous by all reasonably informed persons. The Church of Rome does in fact leave other Christians to bear the brunt of interpreting the Christian faith in relation to the advance of human knowledge, for instance in such matters as the theory of biological evolution, until at last it is reluctantly compelled to tolerate beliefs which everyone else has already accepted. But it is unprofitable to criticize particular beliefs unless the assumptions underlying the Roman doctrinal system are questioned.

Rome attempts to maintain the fiction that there can be such a thing as an unchanging system of beliefs expressed in, or safeguarded by, formulas to which a guarantee of infallibility is attached. As a matter of fact, however faithfully the letter of a doctrinal formula is preserved from century to century, the sense, in which it is understood and interpreted by the persons who use it, is continually undergoing a process of modification, little as they may be aware of it. 'Men do not,' as Lord Balfour said, 'necessarily believe the same thing because they express their convictions in exactly the same phrases.'

Formulas may be fixed, but never the minds that use them. And no doctrinal formula can be absolutely true. It is conditioned both by the temporary habits of thought of the particular age in which it was formulated, and also by the permanent limitations of the human mind. The nature of human thought and language prohibit the possibility of our expressing religious truths in propositions that are final, absolute and free from liability to error. The Roman attitude to doctrine is based on defiance of this inevitable limitation.

It is supposed that the Christian revelation was originally given in formulas which are logically absolute, and that the subsequent definitions by the Church or the pope simply make explicit what was originally implicit and are therefore equally final and irreformable. It is true that Rome has not yet provided an infallible means by which we can tell to what definitions its guarantee of infallibility is attached, and thus the whole doctrinal system which culminates in papal infallibility, while its appearance of clarity, certainty and immutability is readily exploited for popular purposes, becomes curiously elusive when one seeks to come to grips with it. But a system, which is based on false

assumptions, is not redeemed by this ingenious loop-hole that was left by the Vatican Council.

On the contrary, the static view of revelation, which in effect equates divine revelation with a set of human, yet supposedly infallible, propositions must be replaced by a dynamic view, which sees that, since the Christian revelation is the whole of God's self-revealing action in Christ, it can never in the nature of the case be finally and exhaustively petrified in propositions. The Spirit is continually guiding the Church into a fuller apprehension of the Christian revelation. Popes are no more capable than anyone else of arresting this process.

'It is only stationary structures,' Dr. Schiller once said, 'that require fixed foundations.' The Church of Rome is not really stationary, but, as far as dogma is concerned, it wishes to appear so, and remains indeed as stationary as possible. All Churches, not to say all Church societies, are like other institutions by nature conservative and have a tendency to inflexibility. The Church of Rome carries this tendency to its extreme limit. I do not know whether those who themselves follow this course half-way are entitled to take exception to it, or whether they are in a position to criticize it effectively.

Attempts, for instance, have been made to find a fixed foundation for the Christian faith in the figure of 'the Jesus of history' who, it was vainly supposed, had been clearly and for ever discriminated from 'the Christ of faith.' It may also be remarked that there are some Anglicans who would arrest the development of Christianity either at the Elizabethan settlement, or at the Prayer-book of 1661 (or rather at such sections of it as meet with their approval), or at a certain stage of the Tractarian revival, or at the standard of belief and practice which liberal theologians at the end of the nineteenth century found tolerable, or even at the ill-starred Book of 1928. But Anglicans no more than Romanists will be able permanently to arrest the development of the Christian movement; and Anglicans, just because of the freedom and comprehensiveness, which their ecclesiastical polity allows, ought gladly to acknowledge the necessity of continuous development and to be ready to endure the growing pains that are incidental to it.

IV.

The third characteristic of Romanism, which is briefly to engage our attention, is the crucial one, *viz.* the centralization of authority in the papacy. It is this that makes it possible for the Roman Church to maintain its ecclesiastical exclusiveness and its doctrinal intransigence. While the stages, by which the papacy secured its present powers, can be traced far back, it is during the last hundred years that the ultramontane system of government has made its most rapid advances. The policy of Pius IX and the decrees of the Vatican Council established the pope in the possession of an authority in regard to faith and morals, which had long been sought but which had hitherto been open to discussion. But in practice more important than this has been the revision of the Church's canon law and disciplinary system in a direction that deprives bishops and others of relatively independent powers which they had formerly exercised, and that gives to the Curia in Rome an absolute control over the whole Church.

It may be argued that the need for this centralizing policy is justified by two considerations : first, that the attempts of highly centralized and unchristian organizations like modern totalitarian states to deprive the Church of its sovereign spiritual rights can be effectively met only by a corresponding centralization of power in the Church ; and secondly, that the world-wide expansion of the Church needs to be rigorously controlled by a strong central authority with absolute power, if it is not to issue in a loss of unity and cohesion.

These considerations, the expediency of which is obvious, will impress those who believe that the Church must at all costs preserve itself as a political institution and that it must meet the forces of the world on their own ground. The Church of Rome is by no means the only Church which acts on this supposition ; its peculiarity is that as a political mechanism it is far more efficiently organized than any other.

On the other hand, those, who believe that all men and all institutions having power are to be distrusted, and that the most tolerable ecclesiastical or secular order is one in which powers, by being as widely distributed as is compatible with the main-

tenance of social cohesion, are able to check one another, will see in the Roman Church an extreme instance of the nemesis of the centralization of power. In theory it is possible, as dreamers have dreamed, that an angelic pope might arise who would use his powers for the drastic reform of the Church; in practice the power of the pope is the power of the Roman Curia, a predominantly Italian bureaucracy whose activities are lamented by many otherwise loyal Roman Catholics.

The tragedy of the situation is not only that no reforms of a decentralizing or democratic sort can reasonably be expected to be voluntarily initiated by such an institution, but that the disciplinary powers that it now possesses enable it ruthlessly to stamp out any reforming movement directly it assumes an independent or challenging character. It is unjust to blame individual Roman Catholics for the faults of a system which they have inherited; however ardently they may desire its reform, no practicable way of forwarding it seems open to them.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to venture a definite prophecy as to how this impasse will break. There are too many incalculable factors to be taken into account. If it is the case that we are on the threshold of a new dark age, then it may be that for the time being Christianity *as an ecclesiastical institution* will be more effectively preserved by the Church of Rome than by any other; but, even in this case, what will contribute in the long run to an eventual renaissance of Christianity will be not the Roman ecclesiastical mechanism nor the astute diplomacy of the bureaucrats who manage it, but the apostolic succession of devoted saints and heroic martyrs which is maintained in the Church of Rome, though not there alone.

If on the other hand, what seems now a wildly optimistic hypothesis, the disruption and chaos which threaten our civilization were to prove to be only a passing cloud that is not destined for long to interrupt the march of liberal and democratic progress, then the Roman Church would find its system of papal absolutism so grave an impediment to its development that its instinct for survival might lead to revolutionary changes.

V.

However that may be, it is still not out of place to contrast the Roman system with the Anglican. The Church of England is committed both by its past history and by its present constitution to the development of a synthesis between the Catholic and Evangelical elements in the Christian tradition; and while it has the natural tendency to conservatism which is inherent in all mature institutions, its inclusion of so much diversity in thought and practice and its providential lack of a rigorous system of ecclesiastical discipline make possible that freedom and variety of experiment which are necessary if its theology is to be reinterpreted in relation to the growth of human knowledge and to the changes in the secular environment.

This is not to say that the Church of England should flatter itself that it has nothing to learn from other Churches. All that has been said here in criticism of the Romanist position is compatible with the acknowledgment that Anglicans may have much to learn from Roman Catholicism—I do not say, by way of slavish imitation—in regard to such matters as liturgy and worship, or the art of prayer and mystical contemplation, or missionary enthusiasm and evangelical self-sacrifice. It is no more disloyal for Anglicans to acknowledge this than it would be for them to acknowledge that they have much to learn from, say, the Church of Scotland in regard to methods of Church government or from the Society of Friends in regard to the Christian attitude to war.

I want to conclude this summary treatment of a large subject, which has had for the most part to be negative in form, on the positive note with which it began, by quoting some words of Alfred Fawkes, who will not be suspected of any bias in favour of Romanism, and whose name will deservedly be held in honour by members of this Conference. ‘Nor for all her weight of years,’ he said, ‘has it ceased to be with the Roman Church after the manner of women; no Christian alive to the extent and possibilities of the Christian heritage can be indifferent to the treasures of the future which she bears in her ample womb.’

THE HUMANIST SOLUTION

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A THEOLOGIAN of repute brackets humanism with Paganism and materialism as secular philosophies with which Christians have nothing in common. 'The Christian world-view,' he avers, 'is utterly different from that of Paganism, humanism, and materialism.'¹ It is a drastic judgment, and can only be maintained by confining the denotation of 'humanism' within very narrow limits. So far as we are children of our own age we are all humanists, for we are the heirs of that rebirth of the human spirit which we call the Renaissance. Little though some of the early Humanists, engrossed as they were in literary antiquarianism, may have suspected it, the vitalizing influence of the thought of antiquity was destined to beget a new movement of the human spirit which has led to ever new adventure and ever new conquests. We use the same compass and are guided by the same stars as the pioneers. The principles of humanism belong to our common heritage, and are accepted by us as unconsciously as the air we breathe.

'To place a general reliance on the faculties of the human mind,' writes Charles Beard, 'to suffer, if possible, no unverified assumptions, to bring the most widely accepted principles to the test of facts, to lay a broad basis of observation for every induction, to test what seems to be fresh truth by crucial experiment, to expect uniformity in the action of natural forces, are all rules which cannot now be formulated without a sound of commonplace.'²

Such commonplace maxims mark, he adds, the contrast between the working of the modern mind and that of the mediaeval mind. They are the maxims of humanism in its broad sense, the humanism of to-day and of yesterday alike.

Though Humanism was not at first directed specifically against the Church, it 'produced an atmosphere in which the Church's tapers would not burn, and flickered out of them-

¹ Dr. W. B. Selbie in *The Spectator*, August 13, 1937, p. 271.

² Charles Beard, *Hibbert Lectures on the Reformation*, 1927 Edition, p. 375.

selves.’³ Again, in our own day, the Church’s tapers do not burn with too steadfast a flame. The urgency of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Recall to Religion testifies to an uneasy consciousness that this is so. May it not be that even now the ecclesiastical atmosphere is alien from the atmosphere natural to vital thought and activity? After the Renaissance religion showed itself to be stubbornly resistant to the new movement of the human spirit. Protestantism created a new Scholasticism hardly less rigid and cramping than the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages, while the Catholicism of the Counter-Reformation reacted by defining its dogmatic position with a precision never before approached. The result was that the Church lost the leadership which it had exercised for a millenium.

Modern humanism is continuous with the Humanism of the Renaissance. To humanism we owe our modern respect for veracity and our modern distrust of abstract speculation divorced from fact. It is our regard for truth which prohibits the luxuriant growth of legend which was a characteristic of the Middle Ages. This efflorescence was, it is true, spontaneous, the fruit of a mentality which blurred the distinction between fact and symbol and was widely vitiated by an uncritical credulity. But this is no adequate apology for the readiness of the Mediaeval Church to bolster up its claims by wholesale forgery, of decretals, apostolic constitutions, and even of writings of the Early Fathers. We can only say of this that, as the end in view was the glory of God, the legitimacy of the means was subjected to no close scrutiny. But Humanism begat a more austere regard for truth. In the new light of the Renaissance, ecclesiastical forgeries were exposed as the frauds they were, and no less frauds because they were actuated by motives of piety. ‘It became evident,’ writes Lord Acton, ‘that the divines of many ages had been remarkable for their incapacity to find out falsehood, and for their dexterity in propagating it.’⁴ Divines of our own age are rarely, if ever, guilty of such gross turpitude, though in the secular sphere we cannot be too sure that the fog generated by the new mysticisms of blood and race and class and soil may not obscure the clear standard of veracity for which we are indebted to Humanism. The readiness to manipulate the

³ *ibid.*, p. 51.

⁴ J. E. E. Acton, *Lectures in Modern History*, p. 78.

powerful means now available for the purpose of mass suggestion is one of the most disquieting features of the present age. But unless the humanistic spirit be utterly quenched, the demand for frankness and veracity will persist. It is no doubt in part because men doubt whether in the cloister they will find the same intellectual probity which is taken for granted in the laboratory that the High Priests of Science have to a considerable extent ousted the ministers of the sanctuary in popular regard.

The regard for truth which characterizes humanism is closely linked with a respect for fact. 'What is truth?' asked Pilate, whether in jest or in earnest. The humanist replies without hesitation that it is at the very least a meticulous regard for fact and a refusal to distort fact in order to force it into conformity with preconceived opinion. Among the characteristics which distinguish the working of the modern mind from that of the mediaeval mind Beard includes an insistence on bringing even the most widely accepted principles to the test of facts. Instead of allowing the human spirit to soar uncontrolled into an imaginative world of its own creation the humanist insists that, as we start from the ground of human experience, so we must ever be prepared to test our conclusions by the facts of experience. This is the veriest commonplace of scientific humanism. After forming his hypothesis on a basis of observed facts, the scientist tests it by fact, and even when it has survived the test and become a theory which proves itself capable of covering an ever-increasing number of facts, the theory does not become sacrosanct in the sense that it is beyond challenge. On the contrary, it is always being challenged, and is at any time liable to modification, extension, or abandonment, if the facts demand. This respect for fact is an integral part of the probity of the humanist, whether he be a natural scientist or a historian. The standard is a rigid one, and by that same standard the religious teacher must submit to be judged. If he falls short, he may not plead in mitigation that sanctity of Creed or Scripture. The urgent need of a Recall to Religion is in large part due to the failure of the Church to conform to this standard. As knowledge has increased, the Church has been so steadily obstructive that the ecclesiastical history of the last hundred years may be

read as the record of a series of stubborn rearguard actions fought, often with considerable skill, against the scientist and the historian. It has not increased the respect in which the Church is held that each action has been followed by a strategic retreat.

There is reason to hope that this unhappy chapter is now closed. But a new tendency has already appeared well above the horizon. It has proved impossible indefinitely to kick against the sharp prick of facts. May we not then find a way of escape by seeking refuge in the world of abstractions? Alleged facts, if challenged, may be interpreted as symbols, and inconvenient criticism parried by the ready admission that dogma must necessarily be in large measure mythological. This type of apologetic has a certain plausibility. But it is more superficial than appears at first glance. Thought necessarily proceeds by way of abstraction, and in some departments of thought the degree of abstraction is very radical. Mathematics provides an example, for in pure mathematics all qualities are abstracted and numerical relations only left. The infant, learning to count, to add, and to subtract, is driven to disregard, though perhaps unwillingly, the various bright colours which distinguish the beads on his abacus. All classification involves the abstraction from the things classified of the qualities which differentiate them. But the humanist use of the method of abstraction differs very widely from the way in which it was used in the pre-humanist era. 'If the mediaeval mind,' writes Professor Huizinga, 'wants to know the nature or the reason of a thing, it neither looks into it, to analyse its structure, nor behind it, to enquire into its origin, but looks up to heaven, where it shines as an idea.'⁵ In other words, the mediaeval mind hypostasized ideas, and delighted to exercise its ingenuity in the manipulation of its own hypostasizations. Hence the puerilities of that degenerate Scholasticism against which Erasmus directed the sharp-tipped arrows of his satire and Luther rose in angry revolt. It is quite otherwise that the humanist uses the method of abstraction. He will never allow his abstractions to detach themselves from the concrete and float free from their original ground in human experience. The theologian should in this be ready to learn from the humanist. *Vox dei revelatur in*

⁵ J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, p. 195.

rebus said Francis Bacon. Unless God is revealed in and through human experience, it is vain to seek Him in the abstract constructions of an imagination which has cut itself free from the source of its abstractions.

Beard included among the characteristics which distinguish the working of the modern from that of the mediaeval mind an insistence on bringing even the most widely accepted principles to the test of facts. But nevertheless in many minds a prejudice persists in favour of abstraction, so that even one so great as Kant could expressly characterize the ground of experience as low and humiliating.⁶ It is well that we should learn that at the end of our climb up that Jacob's ladder which leads by ever more refined abstractions into 'the dim inane of the Absolute' it is the Absolute that we shall find and not God. It leads to the realm in which the 'unearthly ballet of bloodless categories' weaves its phantasmal patterns. F. H. Bradley, the begetter of this memorable phrase, admitted that 'short of the Absolute, God cannot rest, and having reached that goal, He is lost and religion with him.' To which Mr. Paul Elmer More retorts that Bradley, guilty of the fault, pardonable perhaps in an Oxford don, of identifying himself with Deity, might more modestly have said, 'Short of the Absolute I cannot rest, and, having reached that goal, I am lost and religion with me.'

Humanism to-day, as always, insists not only on the unavoidable necessity of starting from the ground of human experience but on the importance of keeping in constant touch with it, and it also stresses the fact that this experience has been broadened and formulated in the growing body of knowledge which has been accumulated during recent centuries. The new tendency, to which I have referred, to seek a refuge for religion within a sphere where it will be immune from the criticism of such a humanism, may increase. The theology which it shapes will seek to avoid friction with secular thought by treating fact, so far as it finds it convenient, as symbolic. So, within its own sphere, it will count itself invulnerable. In the air of the common world, the world of the humanist, the Church's tapers may flicker to extinction. But what matters that, if within the incense-

⁶ *Vide* P. E. More, *The Sceptical Approach to Religion*, p. 110.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 114.

laden atmosphere of the sanctuary they burn with an undimmed flame? The Church can now summon those whose eyes are wearied with the harsh glare of the daylight outside to seek repose in the dim religious light within. Here they will breathe a more spiritual air and find rest for their souls. It is significant that this tendency is associated with a revival of Mediaevalism in thought and practice. It is in fact a religion of *Escapism*, offering a door of escape from reality into an alleged realm of the ideal, of escape from the present into a reconstituted past. It is inconsistent with the spirit of humanism, though it is true that there are humanists who are prepared to regard it from outside with benevolent and rather condescending tolerance. Such a one is Mr. Santayana, who, though no theist, admits the success of such a religion in opening vistas and propounding mysteries which constitute another world in which to live.⁸

There is however another road which the Christian believer may take, a road which involves no attempt at escape from the humanist world to which, whether we like it or not, we belong. He may readily admit that faith must be grounded on experience; but he will claim that there is a type of experience which is as real as any other, an experience, an intuition which gives a knowledge of God by direct acquaintance. If his claim is justified he has every right to call himself a humanist, albeit a theocentric humanist. This is the line taken by Baron von Hügel, who held that man possesses an innate and immediate sense of a spiritual object which is capable of developing into knowledge of God just as an infant's vague perception of its physical environment leads to knowledge of an ordered world. Conclusive as a basis of faith though such an alleged spiritual experience may be to those who are assured that they possess it, it is highly vulnerable to criticism. Most men would deny that they have ever had such a direct experience, and among them are to be numbered many of unquestionable faith. In this place and on this occasion it would be a failure in piety to omit to refer to what Dr. Rashdall had to say on the subject at the Girton Conference of 1918. He felt impelled to avow that, so far as he could analyse his own thoughts, he had himself no such intuitive knowledge; and, what is more, he was

⁸ G. Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, p. 6.

sure that the vast majority of his fellow-men, including the most religious of them, were in the same state of mind. His acute criticism of the claim to knowledge of God by direct acquaintance, on the ground that those who make the claim agree on not a single proposition about God, is doubtless familiar to many of my hearers. The knowledge claimed is intuitive knowledge. the word *intuition* is very dangerous in use unless closely defined. In alleged intuition there is very frequently a hidden and unacknowledged process of inference which may be described as short-circuited thinking. When I sit at the piano reading a piece of music, I may say in a loose kind of way that when I see a certain printed chord on the music sheet I *intuitively* strike the corresponding chord on the keyboard. In reality I do nothing of the kind. The process by which I connect the two was laboriously acquired many years ago when I was a boy. It is still essentially a process, though now it is short-circuited. So, it may be reasonably suggested, is it with so-called religious intuition. Though it is barely present to consciousness, the process of inference is nevertheless there.

If the way of inference is the way which leads to religious faith, the humanist insists that the process of inference must lead from the lower to the higher, not in the reverse direction. Mr. Santayana, for example, condemns as a characteristic of superstitious minds that 'they apply the higher categories before the lower — an inversion which in all spheres produces the worst and most pathetic disorganisation, because the lower functions are then deranged and the higher contaminated.'⁹ Let us ask ourselves whether we can tread the path of inference side by side with the humanist. When we have gone as far as the non-theistic humanist is prepared to go, it is possible that we may find that we may reasonably take a still further step. In insisting on advancing by way of inference, I of course do not for a moment suggest that normally the believer has himself traversed this road step by step. On the contrary most believers accept the inferences which their forbears have drawn.

I have already referred to Mr. Santayana. Professor Dewey, his compatriot, is another non-theistic humanist whose writings have exercised a wide influence. Professor Dewey rejects all

⁹ G. Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, p. 24.

religious creeds and institutions. He acknowledges himself to be a child of the Renaissance. In his opinion the Renaissance was essentially a new birth of secularism, and, according to his reading of subsequent history, 'the forces that have worked to humanize human relations, that have resulted in intellectual and aesthetic development, have come from influences that are independent of the Churches.'¹⁰ So far as this is true we welcome the fact. No one, least of all the Christian believer, would wish that such beneficent forces should be confined within the boundaries of any Church or Churches. Professor Dewey ascribes these forces to the existence of ideals, and, though he rejects religious creeds and organizations, towards these ideals he adopts what he calls a religious attitude. Up to this point we may walk in happy companionship with Professor Dewey. But here he comes to a halt and asks himself and us a question. Whence come these ideals? He replies that they are the creation of the human imagination envisaging what ought to be. To this we may well assent. But at this point he delivers his attack on religion. Religion, he avers, has made an illegitimate leap from the faith that something should be, to the intellectual belief that it is already in existence. It has moreover been guilty of burdening ideals with beliefs and practices which are not only adventitious but mischievous. I think that we must acknowledge that this second charge contains some substance. Now it is our turn to ask a question, and it is a question which as good humanists we need not hesitate to ask. Out of what stuff does the human imagination create its ideals? If they be but subjective dreams engendered of imaginary stuff, on what grounds do we yield them a religious kind of veneration? Professor Dewey's answer is sufficiently clear. Our aims and ideals 'are made out of the hard stuff of the world of physical and social experience.' 'Our successes are dependent on the co-operation of nature.' Can our humanist companion complain if we refuse to stop at this particular point? So far as experience teaches us that nature co-operates with the ideals of man, that these same ideals are formed from the very stuff of nature, it is no blind leap in the dark but a perfectly reasonable step to conclude that behind this nature is a Mind to which our

¹⁰ J. Dewey, *A Common Faith*, p. 64.

minds are related. We can take this step without claiming any knowledge of this Mind by direct acquaintance, and it assuredly does not involve the mental formation of those increasingly tenuous abstractions against which the humanist justifiably demurs.

I do not know whether Mr. Santayana would go quite so far as Professor Dewey in relating human ideals to the world of nature. For him they belong essentially to what he calls the Life of Reason. They indwell within man. Mr. Santayana will at any rate admit that things *often* have affinity to human interests, and he professes an attitude of pious reverence to the whole natural cosmos as the source of his being. And yet, to him, a soul is but 'the last bubble in a long fermentation in the world.' We may find it none too easy to understand how a bubble, strangely endowed, as Mr. Santayana allows, with purpose and a capacity for forming rational ideals, can feel any piety towards a mere process of fermentation which, presumably, is without purpose or meaning. Though revering the whole natural cosmos, Mr. Santayana will have nothing to do with Comte's worship of humanity. 'Man is not adorable,' he says, and in this judgment most sensible people will concur. Man's ideals, however, are to Mr. Santayana adorable, and they are elicited from within his own soul. Again, we cannot but remind ourselves that this soul has been presented to us as the last bubble in a process of fermentation. At this point, it is alleged, degeneration sets in. Out of human ideals religion creates symbolic and poetical myths. To this Mr. Santayana takes no exception. But when religion proceeds erroneously to attribute existence to the myths it becomes idolatry. Its fate henceforth is to live in an imaginary world as alien from the intellectual world as it is from the economic and political world. The attempt of the Liberal Catholic to live in both worlds at the same time Mr. Santayana treats with derision.¹¹ Mr. Santayana takes us to much the same point as Professor Dewey, though he leads us by a somewhat different route. If we stop there we are left with a religion, if so we may call it, which is little else than a refined spiritual Narcissism. We are compelled to ask ourselves whether the world in which we are placed is responsive to our ideals. If

¹¹ *Winds of Doctrine*, pp. 25-27.

we judge that it is, our judgment is a pregnant one, and no humanist need be ashamed to conclude that it involves a theistic faith.

Our examination of humanism has by no means led us to conclude that it is necessarily inimical to Christianity. We do well to remind ourselves of the contribution it has made and still makes to the spiritual wealth of mankind. Not the least of its gifts is that it has exalted the virtue of truth to its rightful position. It has inspired men, in the service of truth, to a heroic self-sacrifice which is comparable with that of any martyr whose name is inscribed on the Church's calendar. We remember those pioneers of X-ray research who, in their devotion to scientific truth, died horrible and lingering deaths. Their names are unknown to fame, and they would be well content to have it so, for they sought neither fame in this world nor reward in the next. The world of humanism at its best is a world of ideals. A universe which is responsive to ideals, whether moral or aesthetic or intellectual, which provides a theatre in which these ideals may develop and be effectively expressed in action, is a world which the humanist need not be ashamed to interpret in a theistic sense.

I have referred to Dr. Rashdall, one of the great pillars of Modernism. I will end by quoting another of those to whom we owe much, whose memory we should keep ever green — Canon J. M. Wilson. With true prophetic insight he, when a very old man, looked earnestly for the day when the conception of God would be 'constantly renewed and growing from all human knowledge and experience, from all science, philosophy and psychology.' He in fact envisaged a truly humanist theology and religion. It is a vision which we must not, we dare not, allow to grow dim.

CHRISTIANITY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CHURCHES

By CLAUD MULLINS, Author of *In Quest of Justice; Marriage, Children and God; Wife v. Husband in the Courts*, etc.

FOURTEEN years have gone by since I was privileged to write a paper for a Modern Churchmen's Union Conference, and during those years I have changed from a bachelor to a husband and father and from a barrister to a metropolitan magistrate. I intrude with these autobiographical details because the opinions expressed in this paper have originated in the experiences that these two new spheres have given me. Both as a father and as a magistrate my daily life teaches me the vital importance of satisfying what the Archbishop of Canterbury so well described in his 'Recall to Religion' broadcast as 'the deep, ineradicable needs of human nature which nothing material can supply.' As I watch our growing children I realize that these needs are universal and fundamental. As I watch the people who come before me in court for offences or matrimonial difficulties—often not very different from my own or anyone else's family—I realize that all efforts at reform must fail unless somehow or other there can be evoked a loyalty to Christian standards.

I do not share the Archbishop's pessimism. I doubt if it is true to say of this generation that God is either 'denied' or 'crowded out.' I doubt if it can be said truthfully that 'Just as when Christ came on the first Christmas Day there was no room for Him in the inn, so now there is no room for Him in the noise and bustle of the hostelry of modern life.' I dislike noise and bustle as much as anyone, but despite it all I see in every direction efforts to apply Christ's teaching such as were never made before. As a father I see education to-day being more and more founded on Christ's rule of love. I watch 'progressive' schools with great interest, and, I confess, with some anxiety; I watch with even greater interest their influence on the older schools. Teaching founded on theories of original sin and

operating through fear and punishment is giving way to teaching based on affection for and faith in children. Similarly as a magistrate I see at work the Christian ideal in efforts not only to prevent immoral or criminal conduct, but also to rectify such conduct when it has taken place—unfortunately those least willing to adopt modern methods with crime are often the most ardent church-goers. These tendencies in both education and in penology are based on an ever-growing spirit of love. In other words, teachers and those who work in courts are slowly becoming more influenced by the Christian ideal.

I am not competent to elaborate my theme in regard to education. But as regards penology I can prove my point. Since 1907, except in regard to murder and a very few other crimes, our courts have had an unfettered right to apply the Christian principle of forgiveness, conditionally or otherwise, in every case. The machinery of Probation is in essence one for applying Christian principles. In 1935, of the number of persons found guilty of indictable (the more serious) offences, over one-half were dealt with by one or other of the methods provided by the Probation Act; at Assizes 24 per cent. were bound over under this Act; at Quarter Sessions 31 per cent. and at Magistrates' Courts (including Juvenile Courts) 41 per cent. Of all those found guilty of indictable offences under the age of 17 no less than 83 per cent were dealt with under the Act; 51 per cent. were in addition given the great advantage of supervision by a probation officer. I am far from satisfied with our present criminal administration, and in some respects I think we have been too rash in applying the principle of forgiveness. But at least let us thank God for the progress that has been made. In the early years of the last century there was more church-going (though I doubt if there was less pessimism about the state of society); but there was very little Christianity in the working of the criminal law and even children who would now be placed on Probation were sentenced to death, transportation or imprisonment.

The same force has been at work in our prisons. The numbers sent to prison have been heavily reduced during the present century and as regards those sentenced, to quote the Report of the Prison Commission for 1934, 'the theory of deterrence,

based on solitary confinement and strict uniformity, gave way [after 1895] to a new conception of prison treatment, based on classification, employment in association and individualization. . . . Prisoners on leaving prison [now] return to the world less embittered and at war with society than they did twenty-five years ago.' Nobody can be satisfied with our prisons to-day, but it is not blasphemous to say that they would give far less offence to our Lord than they would have done even a generation ago.

It is my sincere belief that if most of us reflected about our 'shop,' as I have just done, they would similarly find an improvement in the direction of a more genuine application of Christian principles. I believe that our country is slowly becoming more Christian, especially as regards the relations between employer and employee; but not, I fear, as regards excessive nationalism and the attitude to war. Our standards of individual conduct are improving Christ-wards. The Archbishop has summoned us 'to refound our life, personal and national, on the Fear of God, on the Revelation of Himself, of His Will and Purpose for the human race in Jesus Christ, on the standards of human conduct which Jesus Christ has set.' While fully conscious of this need, are we not bound to say, if we look both around us and into the past, that at no time was so great an effort being made to do this as now?

The disturbing factor in the present religious situation, as I see it, is that so much of this progress towards Christian conduct has been and is due to the work of those aloof from, or hostile to, all Christian Churches, and even to Christianity itself as they understand it. As a parent I frequently notice that those parents and teachers who least understand children and their moral lapses are those who are the most loyal to, or most influenced by, churches; conversely that those parents and teachers who are doing most to incorporate Christian principles in their work for children are indifferent or hostile to institutional Christianity. As a magistrate I sometimes observe that those who are most active in penological or legal reform have no ecclesiastical attachments or no interest in the outward forms of religion; as I know to my cost, those who want to bring about changes that are fundamentally Christian are sometimes actively opposed by those who profess and call themselves Christians. Far be it from

my intention to deny that there is a need to-day for a 'Recall to Religion.' But I have the impression that those who hope most from the Recall are the most blind to the deficiencies of institutional Christianity both in the past and in the present. I would not have dared to pen the lines, 'The one really formidable argument against the truth of the Christian religion is the record of the Christian Church.' But that great, though unavowed, Modernist, Canon Barry, has said this in his *The Relevance of the Church* and we shall not get far in a recall to religion without realizing its truth.

My own 'shop' shows so many illustrations of this that it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that those branches of the law that most need drastic reform to-day are precisely those in which ecclesiastical influence has been greatest. The most glaring example of outworn religious belief in our law to-day is, perhaps, the well-intentioned but cruel verdict of a Coroner's jury that a suicide died while temporarily insane; even to-day Christian burial is refused to those who have ended their lives in a manner that is not ecclesiastically approved, even sometimes to unbaptized infants. Again, a great deal of much-needed law reform is concerned with our laws of evidence. For centuries ecclesiastical influence insisted that courts must not permit people to endanger their immortal souls by giving sworn evidence in cases where they had an interest. In civil courts the result was, in the words of Lord Bowen, that 'if a farmer in his gig ran over a foot passenger in the road, the two persons whom the law singled out to prohibit from becoming witnesses were the farmer and the foot passenger.' In the criminal courts accused persons were never allowed to give evidence on their own behalf. These evils have been put right and we have gone to the opposite extreme and now we allow, and even demand, the oath to God so freely that perjury is universal, at least in Magistrates' Courts.

A branch of the law in which religion has had great influence is sexual aberration. Modern psychology is teaching us a great deal on this subject, but not much can be done until we can clear away our ecclesiastical legacy. Urged on in the past by feelings of religious horror, our law still allows a sentence of penal servitude for life for homo-sexual conduct. In fact such sentences

are not passed, but such long sentences are passed that it is hopeless for the prison authorities to attempt psycho-therapeutic treatment, the only cure that has any chance of success. An even worse example is our handling of the problem of abortion. This was once an ecclesiastical offence only. Our early legal authorities were content with the belief, founded on *Exodus* xxi, verses 22 and 23, that 'the law is founded upon the law of God' (Coke). A Modernist realizes that the whole of *Exodus* xxi reveals a conception of social relations that must have come within one of our Lord's immortal sayings, 'But I say unto you . . . ' But there has been no spirit of Modernism in the law. Abortion is widespread to-day, even among otherwise good Christian women. Happily an official enquiry is now being undertaken, but the problem will only be adequately tackled when religious opinion is ready to think less about *Exodus* or about the fate of unbaptized life and more about human needs. We should approach these and kindred problems in a spirit of scientific investigation rather than of religious horror, always allowing ourselves to be guided by the spirit of Christian teaching.

The worst of our ecclesiastical legacies to-day concerns human procreation. In the days of scientific ignorance it was but natural that men should believe that physical disaster was the will of God. But to-day much of what was believed to be the will of God is known to have been caused by such human failures as defective drains. Yet still the same blindness persists. Bishop Wilberforce had six children, the last four in five years, and when his ever frail wife died shortly after her last confinement, he wrote in his diary of 'God, the smiter of my soul.' We of to-day can understand and sympathize, just as we understand the Bishop's puny onslaught on Huxley. But Wilberforce has thousands of successors living to-day. All churches are far more ready to give comfort and assurances about the will of God, than they are to investigate disaster in a scientific spirit and to call in the aid of science to prevent it. I have written on this subject in my little book, *Marriage, Children and God*, and cannot pursue it here, save to express my conviction that the function of churches should be to teach a Christian use of birth-control rather than to indulge in Mrs. Partington-like hostility to it. Yet I fear that the voting on this question at the Lambeth

Conference of 1930 (193 to 67) did not represent correctly opinion in our Church.

Christian churches very properly claim to be the guardians of Christian marriage, but in no sphere of ecclesiastical activity are the words of Canon Barry, already quoted, more true. Virginity has been regarded as a higher state than marriage, the birth of a human soul has been regarded as a blessing from God regardless of the fate of the body, or even of the mind; isolated and disputed sayings of our Lord about adultery in marriage have been accepted as an adequate foundation for a national law of divorce. This year legislative changes of the highest importance have been made in our law and procedure concerning matrimonial failure, but the attitude thereto of ecclesiastical organizations has made me wonder sometimes whether Christian marriage is not best upheld by those aloof from churches.

The Summary Procedure (Domestic Proceedings) Act will bring to the poorest in the land the inestimable benefits of sympathetic enquiry before matrimonial litigation and humane conditions if litigation there has to be. The first legislative attempt in this direction was made many years ago by Lord Snell, and those who have read his memoirs, and still more those who have been privileged to know him, must surely feel uneasy that there was no room in any Christian Church for this man whose standards are and always have been essentially Christian. In my own efforts to secure this reform I was rebuffed by Church organizations. The London Police Court Mission (an offshoot of the Church of England Temperance Society) twice turned down my attempts to secure its support, and I had to resign from its committee. I approached a lady prominent in the Mothers' Union, only to be refused on the ground that 'we are afraid that this legislation might lead ultimately to divorce being more easily obtainable,' when in fact the new Act will be our best defence against divorce.

In the debates on the Marriage Bill the churches have lost a golden opportunity. The English Church Union put forward the view that 'to affirm that marriage is "indissoluble" is to affirm that it cannot be dissolved, not that it ought not to be.'

¹ *The Church, Marriage and Divorce*, published on behalf of the English Church Union, 1936, p. 8.

Most of the public discussion by Churchmen has been directed to the problem of the admission to Holy Communion of those who have re-married after divorce. That those who cannot afford to pay for the advice of solicitors (at least three-quarters of our population) should have Conciliation machinery open to them before they take the drastic step of petitioning for divorce was a demand which one might expect the Christian Churches to support. Two years ago, at my urgent plea, Mr. A. P. Herbert included in his original Marriage Bill a clause to provide this, to place applicants for divorce in a similar position to applicants for mere separation.² Such a humane and, I venture to say, Christian proposal would prevent many divorces, as similar methods to-day prevent countless separations. But Churches took no interest and for lack of support this clause was withdrawn in the Commons.

Thus Parliament has passed the new Matrimonial Causes Act which, if it works (and this is very doubtful so far as the masses of the people are concerned, for a breakdown of the Poor Persons system of litigation may be expected), must result in innumerable ill-considered divorces which will bring havoc in the homes of the people.

Let us leave questions of marriage and come to religious activities in the relief of distress. 'Moral ambulance work,' to use the neat phrase of the Bishops at Lambeth, is always valuable, but it offers no hope that a perpetual repetition of present deplorable conditions can ever be avoided. There is always enthusiasm for the relief of destitute children, for 'waifs and strays,' a name which in itself is a terrible reflection upon a Christian society. If religious opinion could be led into constructive paths, to birth-control, eugenics, marriage law reform, sound sexual instruction and so on, then we could feel that the future would really be more Christian. But I find that so many of those engaged on 'moral ambulance work' never think of the ultimate abolition of the horrible conditions which they attempt to assuage. They love unthinkingly their objects of Christian charity. The Church of England deserves infinite credit for founding and carrying on Police Court and Prison Gate Mis-

² This whole matter has been examined by me in an article in the *Fortnightly Review* for July, 1937.

sions. But when the vast growth of the work made re-organization, and as regards Police Court work State Control, necessary, there arose at once pleas for the retention of voluntary methods and of 'the religious spirit.' But in fact this 'religious spirit' has come to involve defective organization, inadequate supervision, and the shocking over-work and under-payment of workers. To these conditions the religious workers who protested against re-organization seemed blind. So it is with the much wider problems already touched on in this paper. The call back to religion that I should like to hear would be a call to unite in constructive and preventive social work so that the next generation shall have far fewer physical, moral or mental defectives to tackle. At present a great deal of the constructive and preventive work is in the hands of those who have no concern with Christianity, organized or otherwise, and that, I fear, is largely the fault of the Churches.

In the Archbishop's broadcast occurred also the following words :

'To be a Christian is not to make a profession, however sincerely ;
It is to accept a vocation.'

Yet the Recall offers no hope for the countless numbers who are eager to accept the vocation, but who cannot make the profession required by our Church of England. Can those of us who move about in the lay world deny that plenty of those who are 'holding very loosely to the ways or forms of religion' are at least as good Christians as those who dutifully say the creeds in their entirety?

The following from Dr. Major's contribution to that stimulating volume, *The Church and the Twentieth Century*, seems to me to go to the root of the present problems of the Churches and to indicate the only hopeful way of recall to religion :

'What our Church authorities have to realize and face is that there is a doctrinal crisis in our Church and to comprehend what is the nature of this crisis . . . It shows itself, not by the indignant protests of the laity, but by their silent desertion of a Church which adheres to an out-worn dogmatic system . . . Without any form of protest they withdraw from attending Church services and supporting Church activities, save where those activities are social and philanthropic.'

This is only too true of all classes of our people. I recently asked a London Probation Officer whether any considerable pro-

portion of his people had attachments to any Church. His reply was :

‘In very few of the people who come into contact with the court through criminal offences or domestic troubles is any religious knowledge or practice evident. Many when asked their religion reply “Christian,” and not infrequently “English.” Those adults who are in any real contact with a Church are sufficiently rare to appear exceptional.’

The retort is too easy that if these people were practising Church people they would not commit crime or quarrel at home. Such complacency ignores what should be a magistrate’s first lesson, namely, that those whom he sees in court are not fundamentally different from himself or from those he meets outside.

The tragedy in the ecclesiastical situation to-day is, to quote again from Dr. Major’s essay, that

‘the things in our traditional theology which are doing so much to weaken the message of the Christian Church to the largely unheeding world are not to be found in the Gospel of Jesus.’

All around me I see thoughtful people (plenty of whom are leading splendidly Christian lives) refusing to bring their babies to baptism; their adolescents do not come for confirmation; no member of the family attends Divine worship — it is a poor compliment to the Church that parsons are still sought after for weddings and funerals. In plenty of cultured, Christian homes the Bible is as little known as the books of Euclid and children are growing up with nothing but a vague knowledge that Jesus was one of the world’s good men. Yet by every test of conduct a large proportion of these people are Christ-following. As a parent my most perplexing problem is how to bring up our children as Christians. In the *Modern Churchman* for November, 1930, I wrote of my early efforts in this direction. I began with the known and led our children to love Jesus in His human life and work. I seemed to be successful. But then came school and lessons in ‘Scripture,’ and now I am full of doubts and difficulties. The *Church Times* said on 13th November, 1935, that ‘we must bring up our children with clear dogmatic views.’ That is easy; the difficulty comes when adolescents begin to think for themselves. Then parents may regret that they imposed dogmatic views, especially if they themselves cannot believe and justify such views, for in the long run the children

of to-day are not likely to believe what their parents have rejected. The position seems tragic to me. In adolescence the strictest and most valuable pledges about loyalty to Christian ideals and standards would cheerfully be given by many thousands who will never bind themselves to all the statements in the creeds. But our Church bars the way, so far as her own ministrations are concerned, save to 'such as can say the creed.' To impose dogmatic views in childhood, only to have them evaporate in adolescence can do real harm. I am not yet old enough to forget the long years of mental anxiety when I found myself unable to accept so large a proportion of what I had been taught to regard as the fundamentals of religion. Contact with Modernist clergy has, I hope, saved me from a total rejection of Christianity, but only too often reaction against blind faith involves the rejection of Christian standards of conduct as well as dogma.

What message is the Church of England going to have for homes where there is loyalty to Christ's own teaching but scepticism in regard to the Church's dogmas? Members of such homes are in the vanguard of movements to make our corporate life more Christian, but they lose a great deal by remaining aloof from organized Christianity. Religion seems to me the most hopeful method whereby, for instance, a parent can show a child the inadequacy of the saying that honesty is the best policy, or that an undiscovered wrong bringing material advantage is none the less a wrong. Religion is the best defence against this grim experimenting with sexual morals that is having such devastating results in countless homes to-day. By a religion based on God's love for all mankind and the equality of all before Him young men can be brought to realize that sexual experience before marriage is wrong, that even if beneficial to themselves, its ultimate harm to the women concerned and to women in general is its condemnation. Christ's teaching seems to me the only hopeful way of countering the dangerous modern heresy that 'the demands of sexual development require that young men should have sexual intercourse before marriage and pass through a period of trial and error.'³ I hope that I should hate such teaching as the father of a son as well as the father of daughters.

³ *The Psychology of Sex and Sex Education*, by O. Schwarz, M.D., p. 20, published by the New Education Fellowship.

Without the support of religion it is terribly difficult to strengthen young married people in those periods of marriage when disappointment seems acute, or to convince warring parents of the strength and joy that comes from fulfilling our duty to our children. The Christian standard of life-long monogamy will never be, and never has been, promoted by punitive laws or a refusal of all divorce. Our aim should be that men and women shall realize that 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' Yet at none of the moments of trial that I have just indicated does any help necessarily come from dogmatic assertions about the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection of the Body or the authority of the tradition of the Church.

Modernists are entitled to hope that the Archbishop will himself take the lead in making good his words about the difference between profession of faith and acceptance of vocation. In Mr. Harvey's galaxy of stimulating thought Dr. Dearmer wrote :

'If Christianity is to survive as a religion of fellowship, still more if it is to triumph, it must be freed from theological entanglements and men must be able to belong to the Christian Church on Christ's own terms.'

That does not involve the repudiation by all of the view put forward in the recent Bucharest Report that

'everything necessary for salvation can be founded upon Holy Scripture, as completed, explained, interpreted and understood in the Holy Tradition by the guidance of the Holy Spirit residing in the Church.'

The Modernist plea is merely that those who can say every statement in the creeds and who believe in the validity of the Holy Tradition shall not exclude from the Church those who accept Christianity as a vocation without being able to do either. Is there any necessity for the Church of England to be totalitarian? It is bound to be difficult for those who believe that 'whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith' to unite in spiritual fellowship with those who regard many statements in the creeds as of value from the standpoint of the history of beliefs rather than of the history of events. I would go far in supporting liberty for Anglo-Catholics if they would recognize (quoting Dr. Major's essay again) that

‘what is a “very comfortable” doctrine for some men is a most uncomfortable and incredible and impossible and un-Christian doctrine for other men, and these other men are as much entitled to the ministrations of the Church in this modern world as are the former.’

There could be no better authority for a modification of credal tests for such clergy and laity as must otherwise keep away from the Church than the words in St. Matthew, ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.’ There is surely a warning against the refusal of such a modification ^{pap} the words from the same Gospel, ‘Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.’

A magistrate must be forgiven when he regards the effect on conduct as the test of a religion. I am convinced that even a successful Recall to Religion will have no great effect upon human behaviour if it merely results in a more widespread acceptance of credal tests or the Holy Tradition. In my magisterial work I watch day by day those who come before me and I cannot discern that dogmatic beliefs or ecclesiastical practices have much effect on conduct, or even on general standards. It seems to me that the true Recall to Religion would be based on the sayings of our Lord, ‘Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and mother,’ and ‘Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.’

Father Tyrell wrote in *The Church and the Future* :

‘It is primarily a way or manner of life that has been committed to her [the Church’s] guardianship than a body of doctrine.’

An up-to-date version of the same statement is to be found in the current Report of the Prison Commission, where the Governor of a Borstal Institution writes :

‘Discussion meetings between chaplain and staff have proved of great help, particularly as they have led to the conviction that what is most vital for those who hold to Christian teaching and belief is not so much particular tenets of theology as rather the daily practice of the Gospel.’

To-day an increasing number of clergy in the Church of England long for a time when all members of our Church will profess the Catholic Faith as defined, to begin with, in the conversations with the Rumanian Church, and later by Rome. Such

dreams are fantasies, and harmful fantasies. There will be no successful 'Recall to Religion' unless the Church of England can find some means for including within its ranks, both as clergy and laity, those who are loyal to Christ but cannot bind themselves to doctrines that He never expounded. Without such inclusion our Church will increasingly become a sect. Then anti-clericalism may easily arise, as it arose in Spain, and even the fate of the Church in Russia may follow. We should take warning from what Mr. Maurice Hindus wrote in his book :

'For the real cause of the religious disintegration in Russia we must search in the conditions of the people, especially the peasantry, and in the faith which they professed . . . The ministration of the Orthodox Church had a sterilising effect on the spiritual life of the peasant. It depended for its appeal, not on living sentiment, on understanding of the real purpose of faith and the meaning of service, but on miracle, magic, ceremonial. It had always emphasised the form rather than the substance, the technique rather than the spirit of worship . . . Consequently the peasant had come to associate religion, not with an inner mood, but with an external act.'⁴

If this can ever be said of the Church of England, its utility in the service of God will have ceased for the masses of our people, who must then be as sheep not only without a shepherd, but also without a fold. In the past those who left the Church of England founded other Christian Churches. To-day the drift is to no Church at all. But the lives of those who have no contacts with any Christian Church are definitely the poorer, and their ability to pass Christianity on to the next generation seems very doubtful. A Roman Catholic friend once said to me, when deploring the 'drift from religion,' that this generation is living on its religious capital. That is true. But if the capital dries up, a pagan community will have little staying power. In England religious capital will dry up unless the Church of England can secure ever-increasing strength from those who are eager to accept Christ, but cannot accept the Holy Tradition.

⁴ *Humanity Uprooted*, pp. 22-26.

THE OPPORTUNITY AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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THE papers already read at this Conference should have left no doubt in the minds of its members that opportunity is not lacking to the Church of England at the present time. Indeed, so many, and so great, are these opportunities, that, as the theme of the Conference suggests, they amount to crisis.

But opportunity has only a potential value, a potential value which works both ways. If it is seized, and used in the right way, then unlimited good may come; if it is neglected, or used in the wrong way, then unlimited evil may result. In the face of these numerous opportunities, what is the Church of England going to do, and what are its opportunities?

In the first place, there is offered to the Church of England to-day the opportunity of revising and widening its teaching. That this requires doing is evident, not only by its lack of appeal to intelligent and spiritual-minded men and women at the present time, but by the fact of its very age, and the circumstances of its formation. Its language is that of mediaevalism, and its thought-forms those of alien, and sometimes barbarous cultures.

What, however, makes revision and widening of the Church's teaching the more urgent is the new light which has come to us as a result of scientific and historical criticism, and from recent developments in other studies. From an intellectual point of view, we live in a new world; if the Church has any sincere desire to make its contribution to this new world, then it must translate both its language and its thought-forms into a tongue which is intelligible to educated people to-day. Is it blindness, obstinacy, self-satisfaction or ignorance, which governs the councils and leaders of the Church in their attitude towards modern scholarship? The deliberations at any rate of Convocation are carried on with complete disregard even to modern

Biblical scholarship, and often in diametrical opposition to it, and the outpourings of the average pulpit exhibit the same characteristics. It is not as though modern scholarship is destructive of the spiritual values of Christianity; it may be destructive of some of the forms in which the Church has cast them, but it is in itself essentially constructive, and its main concern is with that same truth which Christianity claims shall set men free. I am persuaded that it is fear that is at the bottom of the Church's attitude towards modern knowledge, that most debased of all fears, fear where no fear is, fear to face the truth for the sake of vested interest.

The very existence of the Church of England as a spiritual force in this country demands that the issues raised by modern scholarship be faced courageously, positively and constructively. It is not sufficient merely to accept the assured results of modern scholarship in relation to the Bible; they must be applied, and applied fearlessly to the doctrines which have been built up on Biblical and other foundations, as well as to ecclesiastical custom and tradition. But this is not enough, indeed, it is only the beginning of what the Church is called upon to do. The new learning is more than a sidelight upon the Church's existing teaching, it is a new revelation. This new revelation must be added to, as well as made to illustrate the old, for it carries our knowledge and experience of reality beyond and outside the scope of the old frontiers, so that there is no sphere of human experience which is not illumined to a greater or less degree by it. What the Church in the past has been content to call secular knowledge is just as vital to the interests of true religion as is the Bible itself, and should be hallowed and sanctified by the Church's recognition of it as not only relevant to Christianity, but as part of it. Is it too much to expect this of a Church which, from the days of Darwin and before, has refused honestly to face up to facts, but like the ostrich has buried its head in the sands of the past hoping that its incongruous form will not be seen? Decentralization of its teaching and of its organization are the most pressing need of the Church to-day: this I hope to develop later.

Nor is the opportunity offered to the Church of England to-day by the new revelation of mere academic interest or ur-

gency; it is of immense practical importance. Strange though it may seem, what appears to have escaped the notice of the Church has been seized with avidity by young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. The practical findings of modern scientific research, together with many of the results of historical criticism have become part of the stock-in-trade of daily life. So much so is this the case, that this new world is quickly becoming populated by a new people. The outlook on life, its problems, its customs, its conventions is fundamentally different to-day from what it was before the Great War; what is perhaps euphemistically called the 'new morality' has come about.

That some of the benefits of the new revelation should have become common property is all to the good, and much to be desired. There is, however, a real danger that the so-called 'new morality' will become the 'new immorality.' There are two reasons for fearing this; first, 'a little knowledge is a dangerous thing'; secondly, the new revelation has been imparted, at any rate to the majority of men and women, through the cinemas and the popular press, whose intellectual outlook is that of a Victorian kitchenmaid, moral outlook that of a degenerate, and whose interest in the morbid that of an advanced neurotic. To teach the real 'new morality,' and to see to it that the truth, not perversions of it, is instilled into society is more than the Church's opportunity, it is its obligation to God and to society.

Not only is there a great need to-day for spiritual guidance, I believe there is a great desire for it. This is shown by the eagerness with which an increasing number of men and women of all classes are reading serious-minded books and articles, attending educational classes of one kind or another, and by their appreciation of serious talks and lectures on the wireless. Neither the sloppy sentimental novel, nor the goody-goody book of pre-war days any longer attracts; something more serious, something more true to life is required. This is no mere inquisitiveness, it is nothing less than a vast awakening of interest in things and subjects for their own sakes, it is a search after spiritual values as they exhibit themselves in human nature, and in the phenomenal world. With this yearning after the deeper things of life expressing itself everywhere and in every walk of

life, with men and women asking to be taught the meaning of things, can the Church refuse so great an opportunity or neglect so great a demand?

If, however, the Church is to avail itself of this opportunity and answer this demand, it must do more than put forward a number of commandments couched in negative terms, it must do more even than repeat the Sermon on the Mount and other ethical principles already contained in its teaching. It must re-think and re-interpret the Christian ethic in the light of biological, sociological, political, international and economic experience. It must answer the enquiries of those who are searching for the meaning of life by creating in the minds of men and women a God-consciousness, a realization that no solution to the mysteries and problems of life which leaves God out of account is intellectually or humanly practicable.

By long familiarity with a Church which has in the past so often associated itself with intellectual, social, and political obscurantism, and been party to sub-christian action, men and women have come to hold it in contempt, and are ignorant not only of what it should stand for, but also of the Christianity which it professes to teach. I am convinced that if only men and women knew the object and meaning of Christianity, there would be a great religious revival in this country and throughout the world. They would take the Church of England, and the Churches in England, by storm, cast out all them that sold and bought in them, overthrow the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and make them into the House of Prayer. Never was the saying so appropriate, 'the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.'

The Church of England does indeed hide its treasure in earthen vessels; it does more, it gives the impression that there is nothing but earthen vessels. Recent discussions in Convocation on Divorce and Re-marriage have shown a lamentable lack of appreciation of the spiritual realities of life, and of the practical problems involved, for, despite much talk of sacraments, ideals, and divine sanctions, the Church's doctrine has never got beyond the purely animal and physical conception of the relationships of marriage enunciated in Genesis. In this case, as in many others, the State has been far more enlightened, and

what is more important, far more active than the Church, in helping to preserve spiritual values. Before the Church of England can seize the opportunities offered to it by the needs and demands of men, not reformation, but revolution is required. I believe that this revolution can only come from the outside, by violent men breaking through the earthen vessel, and taking to themselves the treasure so long hid.

I have tried to show that in the new learning, and in the so-called 'new morality,' there are, to say the least, latent forces for good which the Church of England should turn to the spiritual advantage both of itself and of society. There are also evil forces in the world to-day, no longer latent, but active, which offer to the Church unparalleled opportunities of Christian achievement and spiritual advancement.

In the first place, the international situation is perhaps more pregnant with danger to civilization than it has ever before been in the history of the world. In the Mediterranean, in the Near East, in the Far East, in Central Europe, and elsewhere, there are wars and rumours of war. The lust for power, and the struggle for existence have led men and nations into actions diametrically opposed to Christianity, and to the very principles of religion. Diplomacy, where effective, has become unethical compromise; gentlemen's agreements break down, because one or both partners to the agreement, are not gentlemen; half the League of Nations has no pretensions to Christianity, and the other half has only pretensions; the final court of appeal is the bomb, gas and starvation. The discoveries of science, which should be for the glory of God, and for the edification of His people, have been turned into forces of destruction, not merely material destruction, but destruction of spiritual things also. Man has changed 'the natural use to that which is against nature.' All the highest ideals of the best thought of our own and other ages seem of no avail against the passions of men.

Yet in religion, and in particular in Christianity, there are 'leaves for the healing of the nations.' Christ taught, 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.' If we believed and acted upon this, there could be no more war. That wars have again so quickly come about

after the last war, is due not to the breakdown of this the Greatest Commandment, but to the failure of the Churches to teach and apply it. It has never been taught in more than a half-hearted way, for the Churches have been too concerned with other things, internecine competition, and that most odious of all odia, odium theologicum. The part played by the Church of England in the Great War was as inglorious as it was negligible. It did little more than put up memorials when it was all over, witnesses to its own inactivity and incompetence in preventing war. The present spiritual and moral degeneracy of Italy and Spain, Russia, and Germany, the strongholds of the three traditional types of ecclesiastical ideology, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant, speaks for itself. In this country, where we have something of a blend of the three, the condition is a little better; what little better it is, is due, not so much to the teaching and action of the Church of England, but to a national ingrained sense of fair-play, decency, and Christian principles.

I do not think that any good can be served by the Church of England adopting the attitude of a dictatorial shepherd crying, 'Peace, peace; where there is no peace,' and preaching an impracticable pacificism; nor should it nurture craven fears of war. Its task, and surely its great opportunity in the face of a universal hatred of war, and with the smoke of battle about our nostrils, is to teach that great International Law enunciated by our Lord, the brotherhood of all mankind. Slow though it may be as a process, it is, I am convinced, the only process, and it is slow only because it has not been done before. If, in the meanwhile, war comes, then let the Church see to it that it is as honourable a war as war can be.

A second force, or rather confusion of forces actively propagating themselves, and affording the Church of England a further opportunity of making a constructive contribution to the life of society, is that signified by the words Communism, Socialism, and Fascism. None of these is more than a social theory, and all of them are impracticable. They are impracticable, because they do not take seriously into account the real unit of which society is composed, namely, human nature, and because they do not realize that it is only on a spiritual basis

that society can exist at all. As theories for the mechanization of humanity, they are ideal; but human nature does not want mechanizing, in fact, it won't be mechanized; what it does want is spiritualizing.

But these ideologies, nevertheless, have some good points; they all recognize, for instance, the solidarity of the human race; in a somewhat restricted sense, they recognize at any rate the brotherhood of some menkind; they recognize too the need for a philosophy of life and in life, in other words, the need for religion, though they would be the last to call it such; they recognize that all men have a right to expect a share and an adequate share in the natural wealth of the world. These are primitive, rudimentary, and essential ideals for society, common to, and practised by most backward peoples; equally they are all found in Christianity, though it gives them an entirely different significance, and advocates their attainment in a different way. That Christianity contains all these ideals, and a great many more beside, seems to have been forgotten; I suspect that the present generations never knew. I am convinced that if they did know what was the teaching of Christ, what are the social, economic, political, and international implications of Christianity, a new 'ism' would arise, embracing all that is best in these we are now familiar with, and taking them by storm, namely, Christism, the 'ism' of being a Christian. Here is the Church's great opportunity courageously to teach men the principles of Christian love and Christian conduct, and itself to live by them. It is no good neglecting these 'isms' when men have nothing else to live by.

A third opportunity of bringing good out of evil which presents itself to the Church in this country to-day is afforded by its own divisions. The Jews crucified the body of Christ; Christians have torn it in pieces. There was a time when we were rather proud of our so-called 'unhappy divisions,' but there are numerous signs now that the tide is turning. We are beginning to see how futile they are, nay more, we are beginning to realize that the present contempt in which the Church of England is held, and its loss of influence in the life of the country, are largely due to this cause.

The Church of England has at last begun to realize that in

unity is strength, and there are the beginnings of a moving together. But they are only the beginnings, and, from the point of view of a revival of spiritual life in this country, they are from the wrong end, and on wrong principles. There is something of the supposed snobbishness of the great English Public Schools about the Church of England and its attitude towards the Free Churches; Rome we know (though they won't play with us), Roumania we know, and a few others, but who are ye? Can we hope for any good to come out of attempts at reunion or intercommunion, when the first overtures are made with Churches far enough distant never to be of any real practical value, and whose lack of knowledge of the English language, and ours of theirs, makes 'doctrinal agreement' a farce, and intercommunion the first fruits of ecclesiastical snobbishness?

There never has been a really sincere attempt to reunite, or to establish intercommunion with the Churches of our own land, and there are no Christian reasons against it. But there are causes, and they exist on both sides, namely, vested interests, ecclesiastical pride, and the supposed spiritual proprietary rights of Apostolic Succession. It is pathetic to read the Bishop of Gloucester's denial in *The Times* of August 26th, that at the close of the recent Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order, he said: 'One could not refuse to be present at a good Presbyterian or Methodist or Congregational Sacrament because there were no Episcopal Orders.' What he did say was: 'I cannot believe that He would refuse to be present at a good Presbyterian or Methodist or Congregational Sacrament, because they had no Episcopal Orders.' As I expressed it to the Editor of *The Times* in a letter which he failed to publish, being too preoccupied, I suppose, with red-currant jelly, ragwort, or grey squirrels: 'It would be interesting to know why, if the Bishop of Gloucester believes that our Lord is present at a good Free Church sacrament, as apparently he does, he cannot himself consent to be present also.'

I am convinced that before the Church of England can hope to regain the allegiance and respect of English people, and so fulfil its function in this country and in the world, it must put its pride, its vested interests, and its supposed spiritual proprietary rights in its pocket, and, in the spirit of its Lord, join

in brotherly fellowship and communion with all those who in any way recognize His sovereignty over men's hearts and lives. This is the Church's greatest opportunity, not only of furthering the cause of Christianity, but also of showing to the world that despite its many imperfections, it does possess something of the spirit of Christ. Disunion may be a clerical privilege, but reunion is a vital necessity.

Such then are some of the main opportunities which present themselves to the Church of England to-day. On the one hand is the opportunity of revitalizing its teaching and its life by means of what is nothing less than a new revelation, a new revelation which this country is ripe to receive and is receiving, though not always through the right channels. On the other hand, forces which know not the sovereignty of God, and which find no place for spiritual values, together with the Church's own divisions, are causing chaos and confusion in the minds and lives of men which call for all the spiritual guidance and action the Church of England can command. In dealing with these opportunities, I have to some extent dealt also, in a general way, with some aspects of the Church's mission. We must now turn to examine this problem in greater detail, and from a more specific point of view.

The main mission of the Church is, I believe, not to save men from the world, but to make them fit to live in it. This in the past it has attempted to do in three ways, by teaching, by worship, and by pastoral care. It would seem that it is along these same lines that the Church of England must carry out its mission in the future.

If, however, its mission is to be successful, as I have already suggested, revolutionary changes will have to take place; changes which will cut right across many of its cherished beliefs and dogmas; changes which will involve reorganization, and in particular decentralization; changes which will alter its very form; but changes which it is the vital part of the mission of the Church of England to-day to make. What are these changes to be?

In discussing the teaching mission of the Church of England, especially at a conference of Modern Churchmen, it would seem unnecessary to emphasize the need for teaching the Bible

in the light of modern knowledge. But of such importance to the future of Christianity is this matter, that I must mention it again. At the present time the Bible to the vast majority of our people is not only a closed book, it is a lost book. It has become lost because it had become unintelligible. But, as I have already said, the findings of modern Biblical scholarship have once more made it intelligible. These findings are, however, at the present time the possession of, shall I say, the leisured few, Biblical scholars and students; there is a grave danger that they will remain in their possession. No research work, however good or important it may be, can ever achieve its end until it has become the common property of mankind in general: until its results have been absorbed by society, it must remain something of only academic interest and importance. In season, and out of season, it is the duty of the Church to hammer home the treasures which have been revealed by the arduous labours of countless scholars, until the Bible has once more been placed in the position it used to occupy, namely, that of the first book of the land. What is needed from the pulpits of the Church of England to-day, more than anything else, is simple exegetical sermons explaining the meaning of, and giving the circumstances which brought the various books, and parts of books of the Bible into existence. Far too much time and energy are wasted on often quite irrelevant Midrashic enlargements of passages of Holy Writ, or in pious platitudes. England's past greatness was largely due to the influence of the Bible. I am convinced that she will never again be really great till the Bible, with enlightened interpretation, once again takes its place in the hearts and lives of her people. The Reformation put the Bible into the vulgar tongue; it is the Church's mission to put it into the vulgar mind.

But the teaching of the Church of England should not stop here. As I have already suggested, the Bible, while it may contain all things necessary unto salvation, does not contain all things relevant to it. There is the vast amount of knowledge outside the field of Biblical studies, outside what is usually considered to be the ambit of Christianity and of religion, which is pregnant with spiritual worth, and full of religious value. The time has come when the old barriers between the religious and

the secular must be broken down, and the latent religious values of science, art, philosophy, psychology, history, and other subjects must be made patent, and become a part of religious education. Indeed, until education is recognized as religious instruction, and religious instruction as education, we shall continue to produce moral, spiritual, and intellectual cretins. Our educational system is still in the infant class, and it will remain there until we realize that God is the great Educator; until men become God-conscious rather than self-conscious, class-conscious, or church-conscious.

If this teaching mission of the Church of England is to become more than an ideal or theory of education, then great changes will have to be made both in its policy and in its personnel. It is obvious that the clergy are neither competent nor numerous enough to carry out such a programme; but, I have already suggested, not reformation, but revolution is the only thing which will enable the Church to carry out its mission. For this teaching revolution to take place and succeed, the first action necessary on the part of the Church will be to enlarge its borders, and I would suggest three ways of doing this.

In the first place by recognizing not only the spiritual, but also the Christian religious value of the work done by all those societies and associations which are working through research or by educational methods for the discovery and dissemination of truth. They must be recognized by the Church, not merely as useful adjuncts to it, but as a real and vital part of itself.

Secondly, the Church must incorporate as a part of its ministry, professional men and women with a true sense of vocation, and specialists in their own subjects. These it must use, not in a patronizing way, as lay readers or deaconesses, but as true ministers of the Word as revealed in the subjects with which they are concerned. The National Society has recently recommended that the teaching profession is one suitable to those having a sense of Christian vocation; would that the Church itself would recommend that any honourable profession or vocation is a part of the Christian ministry.

Thirdly, the Church must train suitable men and women from its own ranks as specialists and teachers in all fields of knowledge with a view to discovering and handing on the great

truths of religion latent in them. In this way, not only will the Church be able to retain its connection with many of its members who now with adolescence drift away, but it will be able to use them as agents of spiritual power. It will also attract to itself many young men and women of spiritual outlook, and intellectual ability, who at the present time are alienated from the Church and from Christianity. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the best men and women who go down from our universities never consider the possibility of the ministry as their vocation. In them, and in others, there is a vast untapped source of spiritual strength, either as 'ordained' teachers, or as part of the general ministry of the Church.

But to take these three steps for the furtherance of its teaching mission, the Church will have to jettison at least two of its most cherished dogmas, that of its divine nature, and that of the three-fold ministry. I cannot myself believe that the result would be anything less than a great advantage in both cases. The doctrine of the divine nature of the Church serves little purpose other than that of erecting barriers around it, and so keeping men away; there is no warrant for it in the New Testament; its own history certainly does not bear it out. The three-fold ministry is certainly primitive, primitive in more senses of the word than one, but it has no more than a sentimental value, and is a great encumbrance to further progress. There is no Christian reason whatsoever why, if the Church needs it for the spiritual well-being of the world, it should not have a hundred-fold ministry.

At present, both in its teaching, and in its pastoral rule, the Church is losing increasingly its connection with educated people. Granted it may be doing good work among the 'less privileged' classes, but is it going to rest content with a situation which means that as education increases and privilege extends, so in proportion its members will diminish? There is something radically wrong with the teaching and with the practice of a Church which rests content to have the best men and women of the country, socially, intellectually, and spiritually, outside its ranks. They will continue to stay there whilst they can find for themselves in their own particular avocations, that spiritual enlightenment, and Christian experience which the Church

should be providing for them. In its increasing policy of centralization and aloofness, the Church is not only preventing itself from fulfilling its mission, it is failing to give credit to, or make use of, those who are.

When we turn to the worship of the Church of England, we find the same obscurantism, the same self-centredness, and the same self-satisfaction which we have found in its teaching. For more than a century now, in accordance with the Church's belief that it is a divine institution, there has been a tendency more and more to make worship almost the sole concern of the Church, and to dissociate it from daily life. So much so has this taken place, that the Church is looked upon by many laymen as the place where curious people who want to indulge in some kind of mystic rite go for that purpose. This wholesale concentration on worship as centred in the Church, and epitomized in the Eucharist, has played a fatal part in separating the Church from the life of the nation. Worship and work, which should be intimately connected, have become almost entirely dissociated.

Of recent years, an even worse thing has happened; not only has worship ceased to be associated with work, it has also ceased to be associated with the intellect. The traditional worship of the Church of England was based upon what were thought to be historical foundations. Modern Biblical and historical criticism have shown that some of the presuppositions upon which certain acts of worship were based, are at any rate doubtful. The traditional worship of the Church, however, goes on in the same way, and indeed, in some quarters, has gathered accretions from the East, and from the West, accretions which, if they have any significance at all to the English mind, have only a magical one. This modern 'flight from reason' as expressed in some forms of worship in the Church of England to-day, is nothing more than sacramental agnosticism; it isn't religion at all, and it certainly is not Christianity. Worship must involve the use of symbolism, but let its symbolism symbolize something which is intelligible, and if the Church still continues to base its worship on what it claims to have been an historical revelation, let it at least be credible.

To lead in worship is certainly one of the primary missions of the Church of England, and for this purpose it is well

equipped aesthetically; but it is no good attempting to lead in worship, when those who are to be led are diminishing yearly in large numbers. The trouble to-day is not so much that the Church does not provide, for the most part, the right type of worship, but that men do not want to worship, and do not see why they should worship. The Church is busy, far too busy, in providing for a need which is not felt. Bell-ringing at odd hours, processions of witness, heightening or lowering ritual are not going to do any good. What the Church must do if she is to hope once again to become the centre of Christian worship is first to cultivate the demand, then and only then can it satisfy it.

The key to this problem is, I think, provided by Dr. J. H. Oldham, in his book, *The Church and its Function in Society*. He says, 'we stand before a great historic task—the task of restoring the lost unity between worship and work.' Here again, surely, the Church of England is called upon to decentralize itself, to give up the idea, pleasant though it may be to some, that only in its churches can God be worshipped, and teach that, 'to work is to pray,' that work done to the best of a man's ability is in itself an act of worship, because it is an act of communion and co-operation with God. If men and women can be made God-conscious, if they can be made to look for spiritual rather than material values, then it will soon follow that they will want both in public and private to offer up the worship of humble and contrite hearts. This cultivation of the desire to worship cannot and need not be done solely from the pulpit; it can be done through the various channels through which I have suggested the message of Christianity should be taught. These channels will generate spiritual energy which will enlighten and quicken the additional and more formal opportunities for worship which the Church has to offer.

Is it too much to expect the Church to recognize the truth and validity of what has always been a part of its own teaching, namely, the priesthood of the laity? It is only in this way that the Church will receive new life in itself, and be able the more effectively to offer it to others. Are we too proud to accept and consecrate to God the gifts of the lives and work of countless saintly men and women who are doing the work of God? If the

Church cannot do this for God's sake, then let it do it for the sake of its own preservation.

Similarly, in the Church's pastoral work, a great deal of expansion and decentralization must take place before it can fulfil its mission. The parish as an ecclesiastical unit worked all right under a feudal system, and with a population not one-tenth of what it is to-day, but it is now a hopeless encumbrance and anomaly. Is it reasonable to expect one man, be he ever so willing, to look after the souls of anything up to 20,000 people? It is difficult enough to look after one's own soul. It is not possible, even if it were desirable, to multiply the number of the clergy by hundreds or thousands. Where then is the help so badly needed to come from?

Again, it is ready to hand in the work of numerous societies and institutions, and in the labours of love, self-sacrifice and service which are being done to-day outside the Church, and without recognition from it. Here in our hospitals, clinics, homes, clubs, friendly societies and other associations for the spiritual as well as for the material comfort of our people, and in the lives of the countless thousands who go about making life easier for others, is a tremendous, and, as far as the Church's pastoral work is concerned, almost untouched source of spiritual wealth. But, as in the case of the teaching professions, if the Church is going to be more than patronizing, it will have to recognize them, not as useful side-shows, or supernumerary adjuncts, but as integral parts of the Church itself, and in the case of individuals, as full ministers of the Sacrament of Suffering. It must also allow them and others an equal place with the clergy on the Councils of the Church. Priestly domination has spelt ruin for the Church in the past; it would spell ruin equally for it in the future.

The machinery of the Church to-day is far too cumbrous and top-heavy to be of much use in carrying on its business. Let it keep the churches, and together with the chapels, let them become Freed Churches; but let it scrap the parish as the main unit of organization, and in its place substitute an ever-increasing number of cells, cells or groups of spiritually alive men and women of every profession and walk in life who will gener-

ate spiritual power and permeate society with it. The organization of the Church is not an end in itself. The Church can only fulfil its function by providing the multitudes of lay men and women who conduct the ordinary affairs of life with a living working faith. At present it is neither living nor working. There cannot be a better society, or a better Church, without better men and women. To revolutionize this country the Church must first revolutionize itself. To do this it will require courage, humility and leadership.